THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

Professor Edwin Lewis of Drew Theological Seminary wields a practised pen and commands a crisp and popular style. In a recent work, *A New Heaven and a New Earth* (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press; $2.00), which amplifies the Quillian Lectures for 1941 delivered at Emory University, he expounds the thesis that it is heaven that makes earth, it is the ideal that controls the actual, it is what men really believe that makes them what they are. Accordingly, if there is to be a better earth, there must be a better heaven.

By no means a novel thesis, though it is to be observed that the author uses the word 'heaven' metaphorically, as standing for what men believe to be most worthy of their devotion. Thus 'heaven' as here used may be described as the ultimate court of appeal rather than as the state of final blessedness.

The thesis is developed largely out of a Biblical background; and there are special references, for example, to Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament to the teaching of Jesus and the Gospels concerning the Kingdom of God. But the Platonic world of Ideas and the Zoroastrian dualism of Good and Evil also receive special reference.

The penultimate chapter, 'Shall the New Earth Be?', affords a good example of the line of treatment; at the same time it contains topical matter which should be of particular interest to our readers as coming from an American preacher and teacher. It is true that he was born in England, but he crossed the Atlantic in early manhood.

Having declared (and the declaration is made over and over again in the course of the work) that we cannot have the new earth without the new heaven, the author goes on to consider how in our time heaven has been impoverished; how therefore the new earth which will eventuate will not be better and richer than the old. His first point is that 'God the Father has been cast out of heaven.'

What he has in view is the modern 'humanism' which is an antonym for 'theism' and a synonym for 'naturalism,' which would dethrone God and enthrone man, which would substitute for Divine Personality a certain Principle, Process, or Value and make man the measure of all things. And when Christian men cast God out of heaven, the loss is the greater; indeed there is grave cause for concern.

'For the Christian God is a Divine Fellowship. The fact of this Fellowship is the basis of every other great Christian truth. Christianity disintegrates when its God disintegrates; and theological modernism, so called, has brought about just this

disintegration. It airily waves aside the Trinity at the same time that it passionately affirms that ideal of universal brotherhood which has the Trinity for its eternal pattern, its metaphysical foundation, and the promise of its eventual realization.'

The second point is that 'Jesus Christ has been cast out of heaven.' In fact the dethroning of God is the logical sequel to the dethroning of Christ. The crucial truth of Christianity is the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ; give that up, and the Christian God is no longer of the nature of a Divine Fellowship. In which case, what happens to the ideal and the promise of the new earth?

'In the uncompromising acceptance of the Christian faith, both as a body of truth and as a demand for congruous action, is the assurance that earth will yet see the will of the Father in heaven being done among men. Where else is there such an assurance? What is the terror that is stalking the earth to-day but grim testimony to the utter impossibility of any fellowship of love coming to pass among men except as men are controlled by the Fellowship of Love which is in heaven—or rather, which *is* heaven?'

The third point is that 'the Holy Spirit has been cast out of heaven.' What is chiefly in view here is the disposition to reduce the Holy Spirit to a pure psychologism, to a matter of subjective experience, with no objective source and reference. It is again to make man the measure of all things. This is a spiritual fatality. It is to neglect a higher or deeper source of power which it is possible for man to 'tap.'

'A heaven without God the Father; a heaven without Jesus Christ; a heaven without the Holy Spirit—what sort of new earth does this promise? Nobody will deny that there is abroad in the world to-day a determination to make a new earth. But the new earth in prospect is hardly one which the Christian man can regard with equanimity. For while we have been asleep, the enemy has been awake.'

Which leads to the fourth and final point: 'The Beast has been put back into heaven.' This is the stark tragedy of our world. The bestial God has usurped the place of the Christian God. The law of the bestial God's realm is not that of holy love but that of self—'ourselves regardless.' And this is the law by which forsooth a new earth is to be made!

'Would you know how the law works? Nanking will tell you. Ethiopia will tell you. Warsaw will tell you. Rotterdam will tell you. Coventry will tell you. Millions of men and women and children in Europe, in Russia, in China, in Africa, in the islands of the sea, will tell you how the law of the realm of the Beast works. And millions more would tell you—if only they were still alive.'

The irony of the situation is that men who do not belong to the realm of the Beast are compelled to act as though they did. Peace and the ways of peace have to be abandoned because the Beast has organized his forces and seeks undisputed sway. Not to feed the hungry is to break a law of the Kingdom of God; to feed the hungry in such a time as this is to enlarge the realm of the Beast.

Shall the new earth be? Most certainly there is a new earth in the making. It will be born of the conflict of heavens, of Gods, of ideals. But if the new earth is to record the triumph, not of the Beast, but of Christ, then there is a twofold task awaiting Christian believers. We must retain the new heaven we already possess, and uncompromisingly proclaim it; and what we proclaim we must seek to embody in life itself.

Christian activity waits as always upon Christian faith. Leagues of Nations and World Courts reflect the spirit of Christ; but while self remains nation will be arrayed against nation, class against class. It is not enough to implement the truth through beneficent enactments; the truth must also be incarnated in human lives. Nor should it be forgotten that perfect fellowship is the human ideal because it is the divine actuality.

'This conviction lies at the very heart of Christianity. Its ideal of a universal brotherhood and of a universal sonship to God is but the proper issue of its faith that the Christ through whom the sonship and the brotherhood are to come to pass is also that Eternal Son who is integral to the very life of God.'

In his recent book, *The Church, Impotent or Triumphant?* (Gollancz; 3s. 6d. net), Mr. Sidney DARK, lately editor of 'The Church Times,' deals faithfully with the Church of to-day. In the dedication of the book to the Rev. Conrad Noel he says that for years he has been restrained by his official position from plain speech. But now 'I am able to say exactly what I believe with no polite reservations.' What he says, to begin with, is that the Church is too timid. It denounces slums but will not demand the expropriation of slum landlords for fear of losing the support of people who put most money into the collection bags. That we have had to wait so long for a Christian revolution is because the Church is afraid of its own divine mission. It is not the Church militant but the Church complacent.

The main charge against the Church is that it has never recognized that the capitalist society, in which 80 per cent. of the population of the world are deprived of their title to material sufficiency, is contrary to the will of God as it is revealed in the Bible and made vehemently clear in the teaching of Christ. 'I do not say that, as an institution, the Church was the ally of the possessing classes.' The reason for this Mr. DARK finds in the over-emphasis on belief which the Church has taught, resulting in the inference that conduct is of less importance.

There has been one gleam of hope lately, from the Malvern Conference. Its revolutionary demands are no less surprising than the presence of an Archbishop in the Chair. Dr. Temple seems to have nailed the Red Flag to the ecclesiastical mast. For the resolutions passed call for the abolition of the private ownership of land and the instruments of production. They condemn the spiritual degradation that results from the wage system. They recognize that the existing social system is 'a predisposing cause of war,' and that without some form of socialism permanent international peace is impossible. But Malvern had a very scanty press. The capitalist bull, says Mr. DARK, at whom the Archbishop had waved the Red Flag, does not appear to be in the least disturbed. The 'Daily Herald' gave Malvern a paragraph or two. So did 'The Times.' But neither Tory nor Labour leader writers thought it worth any comment.

Why? Because it was merely words. The Church revels in talk. Having talked for four days at Malvern, it suggested that there should be more talk by people in the parishes who would meet to discuss 'what is the Christian way of life for them and for society.' In all the Malvern findings there is not one practical suggestion as to how Christians can make things better. It is no use talking of the evils of the old world and the need for a new world unless you are prepared with the weapons to destroy, and with a plan to rebuild. And, judging by the Malvern report, the Church has not considered what weapons are needed or whether it is ready to use them, and has no definite and detailed plan for rebuilding.

But Mr. DARK recognizes, even emphasizes, the necessity for the Church. 'It is because I am convinced that there is a real danger that, without the influence of the Church, the new order may be as spiritually destructive as the old, and that one devil may be driven out to make room for a legion of devils, that I am equally convinced that in its two thousand years of history never was the need of the Church so great, its opportunity more splendid, its responsibilities so heavy, and never will its failure have been so tragic.' Mr. DARK is afraid of the materialism that is rampant to-day, the horrible materialism behind the Nazi outlook, but also the materialism of the left-wing intellectuals on the one hand and the younger generation on the other, to whom a baby Austin seems the most desirable crown of life, and Greta Garbo far more wonderful and admirable than the Virgin Mary.

That is the human degradation against the spread of which the Church must use the limit of its strength.

What then is the Church's duty? Nothing could be more definite or uncompromising than Mr. DARK's reply. The contemporary mission of the Church is to declare that to worship God in sincerity is necessarily to strive for the creation of a socialist state. The Church must fight against the continuance of soul-destroying capitalism. 'To-day its job is to proclaim that for the few to batten on the labour of the many is an offence to Almighty God.' These are some of the *obiter dicta* scattered through the book. And they are summed up in the concluding pages thus: the Church must decide what practical measures are necessary and put them forward as a religious programme—nationalization, the reduction of all incomes by taxation to a moderate maximum, equality of opportunity in education, with the abolition of all class schools. The Church must offer such a programme if it is to save society.

That is what the Church should do if it had vision, understanding, faith, and courage. But has it these things? This question leads Mr. DARK to a survey of the Church. There is some faint hope in the Church of England. It still retains a large proportion of the middle class, though it has lost the very rich and the very poor. And it still has its revolutionary element. The story of Nonconformity is different. It has lost much of its spiritual fervour and also its political influence. Still less can be expected from Rome. Its Right is definitely Fascist and its Left timorously sentimental. It is clear, then, to Mr. DARK that if the Church is to be a creative social and political force it must in this country be the Church of England. 'In this country' presumably means England.

It has many assets and many hampering handicaps. Notwithstanding the falling off of its congregations, it still has prestige and a considerable amount of public respect. Like the monarchy it is a national institution. But, like the monarchy, it is associated with the existing order. And it *is* in some ways unfortunate in its leaders. The one man capable of giving a strong, clear lead is Dr. Temple. Of other prominent men Mr. DARK speaks with frank disrespect. 'Happily,' he says, 'the number of the clergy of the Dr. Inge type is becoming progressively smaller.' Dr. Inge, it seems, is class-conscious. He would have cordially disliked St. Peter and have been horrified by St. Francis. This is one of a large number of pen-portraits in the book of an unfavourable (to say the least) nature.

What the Church lacks, however, is courage. It must have courage to reform itself in the first place. And it must have courage to say plainly what the law of Christ involves for our social system. Malvern has pointed to the evils. What the Church must demand is the plain political remedy. Mr. DARK is convinced that to-day the Church has the last chance that it can have for generations to affect the course of history. It must decide under which flag it will march, and it must decide now. Never in history has there been so critical a moment.

A new and better social order is also the subject of a little book by Dr. J. H. OLDHAM, *The Root of Our Troubles* (S.C.M.; 6d. net). It is the substance of two broadcast talks, is lucidly written, and full of wise and Christian guidance. The war has completely shattered the self-confidence and complacency of modern man. The feeling is universal that unless some new and better social order can be constructed civilization itself is like to perish.

The root of the trouble, as Dr. OLDHAM sees it, lies in a profoundly mistaken idea which man has come to cherish about himself and his relation to God and the world. 'It has been generally taken for granted that the individual, especially the gifted individual, is a free and independent being, lord of creation and master of his own fate; whereas in reality man is essentially a dependent being. He can realize his nature as man, that is to say he can *be* truly man, only by acknowledging his

dependence on Nature, on his fellow-men, and on God.'

This assertion of independence and this claim to unfettered freedom is, of course, nothing new. The primeval temptation in the Garden was supported by the devil's promise, 'Ye shall be as gods,' and ever since then it has been the persistent ambition of sinful man to be as God, master of his own fate and of the world.

But our modern era of discovery and invention gave to man far fuller scope for indulging this ambition. He found himself in possession of undreamed-of power to harness the forces of Nature to human purposes. 'The leading spirits of the age, in exultant mood, bent the whole of their energies to the task of understanding, appropriating, mastering, and enjoying this wonderful world.' Man's confidence in his own power to make the world a pleasant home for himself was unbounded; belief in progress became the working religion of the majority of educated people. And the results were such as fully to justify, for a time at least, this soaring optimism. But by and by it began to appear that there was something far wrong with our Western civilization. Things would not work out in the way that was expected. Man found that he had set in motion forces which he could not control. He found himself, instead of being freer, becoming more and more the slave of the machine which he had invented. The economic and social system which he had brought into existence, far from producing peace and plenty as it seemed so well able to do, has led to keener competition, more bitter class feeling, and finally to world war.

These frustrations and disasters may well suggest that there is something radically wrong with man himself, and with his whole view of himself in relation to Nature and to his fellow-men. Man has been so busy manipulating and mastering the external world that he has had little time to think of himself and of the presuppositions on which he has been acting. 'Now the question has become acute whether men are fit to be entrusted with the powers they have acquired over natural forces. Is not mankind as a whole to-day very much in the position of a small child who is playing with a loaded gun, or who has climbed into a powerful car and succeeded in starting the engine? . . . The question which we have to face in the coming centuries is not that of increasing man's knowledge of the outer world or his power over things, but the question of his own nature and his relation to society.'

The autonomy of the individual has been unduly stressed. One of the chief ideas in education has been the endless possibilities of the individual and the development of personality. Let every man be all that he has it in him to be; let him make the most of himself and of the world. A vigorous and inspiring doctrine, but highly dangerous when held in isolation from other truths. For it is an egocentric doctrine, which leads a man naturally in the direction of an unlimited exploitation of Nature and of his fellow-men. The curse of this is not removed but rather magnified when men in pursuit of their own selfish interests find it best to cooperate with others. It may be for the dominance of their own race, or for the dictatorship of their own class, but the aim is still selfish and the resultant evils only become more vast.

Now in opposition to all this it must be firmly held and widely taught that 'man is not the independent individual, free to follow so far as he can his own bent, which he has tended in recent centuries to suppose himself to be, but that he is—not ought to be, but is—essentially a dependent being—dependent on Nature, on his fellow human beings, and on God—and that the only way in which we can set the world right is by regaining our hold in thought, feeling, and action on this fundamental truth of man's being.'

No one, doubtless, would expressly deny that man is dependent on Nature, yet in the practice of the modern world this truth has been largely forgotten. The great majority of civilized people have little direct contact with the land. They do not know that the soil must be carefully

preserved and renewed if its fertility is not to be destroyed. They regard it as a field for unlimited exploitation, and so the whole face of the ground is scoured and ransacked and impoverished, while out of the bowels of the earth hidden riches are ruthlessly torn, not to sustain human life, but to destroy it. 'The lack of a humble, understanding, reverent attitude to Nature is a religious failing, and it is plain that this *religious* error may have the most far-reaching consequences in the *economic* sphere.'

Man is also dependent on his fellow-men. He is made for fellowship, a social being who can find his true life only in community. Accordingly he must respect the personality of his fellows, never transgressing bounds in an endeavour to exploit them, but treating them as of equal value with himself, co-operating with them and meeting their demand in a spirit of justice and brotherhood. 'The tasks presented to mankind by this encounter of persons with one another, this clash of independent human wills, this opposition and contradiction between person and person, group and group, nation and nation, are far greater and more exacting than the task of mastering the world of things, to which the main energies of men have been devoted in recent centuries.' Yet these tasks must be grappled with and these problems of social and international intercourse must be solved if the multitudinous inhabitants of the earth are to live together in peace as one human family.

Finally, it will not be possible for man to maintain his due relation to Nature and to his fellow-men without a recognition of his dependence on God. Respect and reverence are due to Nature, to the soil, to the qualities of things because God created them. Reverence is due to our fellow-men because they are of eternal value in the sight of God, and we ourselves also are part of this divine order and are dependent on our Creator. There is, of course, very much more than this that remains to be said from the Christian point of view. But, if this be true, then 'the refusal of God is the supreme perversion of man's nature. The assertion of man's independence, which has been characteristic of the modern age, is man's fundamental sin, and hence the root cause of his unhappiness, strife, and suffering. He can be restored to health only by being reunited to the source from which he derives his being.'

Reconstruction Problems.

I. The Profit Motive and Public Ownership.

By the Reverend Stewart Mechie, M.A., Edinburgh.

Discussion of new orders is in the air to-day, and Christians who care deeply for their Master's business cannot afford to ignore it. Hence it is proposed in this series of articles to deal with problems of reconstruction from a Christian standpoint. It must be kept in mind that no new order can be entirely new. We must reconstruct with the materials available. Further, when the Church begins to concern itself with the problems of society, there are two pitfalls to be avoided. On the one hand, there is the danger of being entangled in the details of reforms. On the other hand, there is the reiteration that all problems would be solved if only men's hearts were changed. Admittedly the Church's prime duty is simply to be itself, to be the Body of Christ in the world, working His works and bearing witness to Him by word and life. To change the individual and make more and better Christians is the fundamental social task of the Church; but, even to do so, the Church must have something wider in mind. The Madras Conference declared—'It is not enough to say that if we change the individual we will of necessity change the social order. That is a half-truth. For the social order is not entirely made up of individuals now living. It is made up of inherited attitudes which have come down from generation to generation through customs, laws, institutions, and these exist in large measure independently of individuals now living. Change those individuals and you do not necessarily change the social order unless you organize those changed individuals into collective action in a wide-scale frontal attack upon those corporate evils.' The Church must concern itself with the social order for the same reason as it concerns itself with education, for the pressure of a social order upon the individual may be the most potent education of all.

Perhaps it is by criticizing assumptions as to what true social progress is, in the light of the Christian understanding of man's nature, that the Church can best bear its witness in a time of reconstruction. For many a year there has been much radical contradiction in the aims of civilized society. The most obvious instance is unemployment. For generations inventors with the applause of mankind have been shifting the burden of production from the backs of men to machines driven by some form of natural energy. We have deliberately tried to make human labour superfluous. As compared with natural power and the accumulated technical heritage of the ages contemporary labour takes a smaller and smaller share in production. Yet we call unemployment a curse and make efforts, sometimes feeble and sometimes tragic, to cure it. It is therefore time that we made up our minds whether employment is an end in itself or merely the means to an end. Since our aim in so important a matter is confused, it is not surprising that the social order is full of paradox—poverty in the midst of potential plenty, malnutrition amid the wastage of wealth, expanding productive power and increasing money debt, a scramble for foreign markets while home populations lack the necessaries of life. In the face of this situation there is need for the Church to proclaim some principles of common sense, based on a Christian understanding of the nature of existence—that Nature must be reverenced and not exploited; that the end of man is life, not paid employment; that money was made for man, not man for money; that it is blasphemy to destroy God's bounties while human need for them exists.

The title of this article presents an aspect of social organization that is being much canvassed at present. The report of the Malvern Conference on the Life of the Church and the Order of Society outlines the case against private ownership thus. After laying it down that any system of reform is inadequate in itself, the report declares that there are features in our existing society which, while they can never prevent individual men and women from becoming Christians, are yet contrary to divine justice and act as stumbling-blocks, making it harder for men to live Christian lives. 'In our present situation we believe that the maintenance of that part of the structure of our society, by which the ultimate ownership of the principal industrial resources of the community can be vested in the hands of private owners, may be such a stumbling-block. On the one hand, it may deprive the poorest members of the community of the essentials of life. On the other, while these resources can be so owned, men will strive for their ownership for themselves. As a consequence, a way of life founded on the

supremacy of the economic motive will remain, which is contrary to God's plan for mankind.' Again, under the title 'The predominance of the profit motive,' we read, 'The industrial world as we know it offends at many points against the principles which we have affirmed. To a large extent production is carried on not to supply the consumer with goods, but to bring profits to the producer. . . .' In a recent pamphlet, *It Must be Christianity*, Sir Richard Acland amplifies this case. He points out that at present the overwhelming majority of the great resources of this country are divided up into share certificates or other documents of title which are privately ownable and which confer some measure of income, position, and power on the owners. Inevitably many people seek such ownership, and where many are seeking some succeed. Those who contrive to own most are regarded as at the top of our society and necessarily they set the tone for the rest. If the great majority of the 5 per cent. of the people at the top are bound, by the very structure of our society, to be regarding their own economic interests, the other 95 per cent. cannot be expected to forget their economic interests and live to promote the common good under the motive of service to their fellowmen. Only when the great resources of the country are owned by all of us in common can we appeal effectively to the mass of men to live in the way Christ commanded. Therefore 'it is our Christian duty earnestly to seek now for an order of society in which the shares and documents of title in our great resources shall cease to be owned by private individuals. This is essential, not as an end economically desirable in itself, but as an indispensable means towards ends which are desirable on moral and spiritual grounds.' By 'great resources' Sir Richard means property over which, by reason of its size, the owners cannot or do not exercise a detailed day-to-day supervision. This definition would leave the little shop, the little factory with a score or so of employees, and the farm to be run by individual men on their own account. On the question of compensation for present owners Sir Richard says, 'If we gave the smallest shareholders 100 per cent. of their income, and millionaires 10 per cent. of their present gross income, this would still leave the latter with over £8 per day, and Christians might well feel that this was enough.' Further, Sir Richard distinguishes his position from Communism and Socialism. 'They address their main appeal to the economic interest of the individual man, and they say to him that an economic change is desirable as an end in itself because it will automatically make him economically better off. My appeal is to the community of men. And I say to them that an economic change which is almost irrelevant as an end in itself, is now essential as a means of achieving ends which are desirable not on economic, but on moral grounds. . . . My case is not presented to the individual in terms of what he can get. It is presented in terms of what he has to sacrifice. He has to sacrifice the bad idea of living for his own self-interest.'

The moral fervour which inspires this case against the profit motive and in favour of public ownership is worthy of the deepest respect. Moreover, the kind of society contemplated is one in which there are no more very wealthy men, no such glaring contrasts of rich and poor as at present, and no incentive, because no possibility, for men to make great wealth their life's aim: all of which must appeal to the Christian's sense of values. Several points of hesitation and questioning, however, suggest themselves.

1. The profit motive needs clearer definition than it has yet received. Every industrial and agricultural activity seeks a profit. The amateur gardener who plants a stone of potatoes in his plot desires to harvest several times as much. Is that culpable profit seeking? If it be said that he might avoid the profit motive by giving his produce free to an infirmary, it must be pointed out that his ability to do so depends on his making a profit in some other part of his activities. We need a clearer definition of the profit motive to which exception is taken, and a deeper discrimination as to when it becomes unduly predominant.

2. It may be questioned whether the economic motive functions quite as it is assumed to do. Admitting for the sake of argument that the self-made millionaire rather than the successful politician is regarded as being at the top of our society, we may doubt whether in the present generation, at any rate, the prospect of becoming a second Carnegie or Nuffield fires the ambition of many young men. They know it is impossible and are generally well content, in an age of insecurity, if they can maintain the standard of living that their parents had. The picture of 95 per cent. of the population emulating the millionaires is a doctrinaire fiction. Where the economic motive does operate is precisely in respect of that insecurity mentioned above. The shareholder who sees his shares swallowed up in his company's financial reconstruction, the professional man who fears a rival may set up his plate in the next street, the artisan who may be thrown out of

work at the next slump, the clerk who expects to be replaced by a calculating machine, the married woman who holds an appointment that her unmarried sisters covet, the elderly man who knows there are many juniors waiting to step into his place, all these and many others have economic considerations as a constant undertone of their existence; but public ownership and the abolition of millionaires is no remedy. It is the uncertainty caused by booms and slumps, labour-saving machinery, and the general discords of the economic functioning of society that are to blame.

3. The ownership of property is not always an asset. Consider the case of a boot factory. The boots required by the shareholders and employees could probably be turned out in one week out of the year. Unless the factory can produce at prices the public can pay, and unless in that respect it can compete with other such factories, it will eat its head off for the rest of the year, what with care and maintenance, rates and insurance. The ownership is not an asset but a liability in default of effective demand in the community; and, on the other hand, provided the community can purchase the product at prices which permit the management to keep the concern solvent, it is of comparatively little moment who owns the plant.

4. The example of the boot factory compels one to question very seriously the statement of the Malvern Conference that private ownership 'may deprive the poorest members of the community of the essentials of life.' Public ownership might equally do the same. If the publicly-owned boot factory is to be efficient it will use labour-saving machinery. There may well be, therefore, a large number of unemployed operatives round its gates. They will be deprived of the essentials of life unless an income is given them apart from their now non-existent earnings; and, if an income apart from earnings is given them, they could as easily buy boots and other necessaries, the product of privately-owned industries. There is no guarantee that the abolition of very large incomes through the cessation of the private ownership of our great resources would result in increased incomes for the poor. In so far as some of the poor would become poorer through ceasing to be employed by the wealthy, the very contrary would be the case. Behind much of the propaganda in favour of public ownership there lurks the obsolete assumption that the poor are poor because the rich are rich. That was true in the ages prior to power-production, but, in the present century in peace time, at any rate, there is sufficient plant, labour, and raw material in this country to make a fair standard of life available for all, if only there were effective demand, that is, demand with money in its pocket. However desirable it may be that the extremes of wealth and poverty be abolished, it is not now true that the poor are poor because the rich are rich; and therefore public ownership in itself and apart from the provision of an unearned income for those rendered workless by power machinery would not help the poorest members of the community.

5. What appears to be the evil work of the profit motive may often be due to the over-riding necessity of every concern, privately or publicly owned, to recover its costs. Take the glaring case of fish flung back into the sea. Apparently the villain of the piece is the profit motive in the person of the fish dealer at the ports, who sees no profit in a big purchase and leaves the catch on the fishermen's hands. It should be recognized, however, that the fish dealer has to square his accounts over a period or go out of business. He cannot permanently fail to liquidate his costs and so, in effect, give consumers a subsidy out of his capital; and his costs include not only wages, depreciation, and transport, but also probably interest on the overdraft granted by some bank in the recent slump and certainly some reserve against a future slump. Moreover, a National Fish Corporation would also, on present financial and loan accounting principles, have to recover the same costs. Only after that had been done would the question of profit arise at all; and it might happen that the National Fish Corporation, seeking no profit but merely the liquidation of its costs, would be compelled at times to throw fish back into the sea. The Post Office, for instance, while it certainly operates some services which are not fully remunerative in themselves recoups itself by making a substantial profit on other services. Only within limits set by the necessity of liquidating its costs on the whole can it serve the public good. The deeper discrimination as to the profit motive for which we called above would seem to involve a severe analysis of the elements that enter into the costs of any modern concern, whether privately or publicly owned; and an answer must be given to the question whether when the product comes on the market there is likely to be purchasing power equivalent to these costs in the hands of consumers. The pre-war existence of idle plant and idle men alongside much malnutrition and poverty suggests that the answer is frequently in the negative, and that the money system which ought to facilitate production and consumption is a frustrating influence upon both.

6. The question of public as against private owner-

ship is irrelevant to the most significant problems of our age. Take, for instance, that technological unemployment of which we have already spoken. Ought we deliberately to restrict the application of science to production in the interests of the unemployed? Is employment an end or a means? Do we live to work or work to live? If machines do the work, why should any one be worse off? Must not the community as a whole receive the 'wages of the machine' if the machine is to continue to function? The ownership question is irrelevant to these issues. Again, consider the struggle for export markets. With every country in the world seeking that paradoxical thing a 'favourable balance of trade' there is a constant economic war in peacetime. A serious defeat in that struggle, involving for an important country economic depression, frustration, and suffering internally, is almost certain to lead to the rise of an aggressive temper and so to war. Here, too, the question of ownership is irrelevant. Nationalize the mines and the National Mines Department will still need to push its way into foreign markets to remain solvent and maintain miners' employment. The export fight is not reduced: on the contrary it may be intensified, inasmuch as a National Mines Department might be a more 'credit-worthy' undertaking than a private company and so be more able to get a loan for installing new machinery, with the result of more men out of work, home demand for coal further reduced, and more need than ever of the export market.

7. We seem to have here an instance of the premature moralizing of a quasi-technical situation. Canon Barry remarks somewhere that 'the religious engineer says his prayers, but that will confer no absolution from fidelity to his professional technique.' It is a salutary reminder. When our motor bus breaks down we do not at once assume that the driver is a villain who, for some evil purpose of his own, is intent upon delaying our journey. It may be so; but we assume first that the engine is defective or that the driver is incompetent. When social affairs, however, get into a tangle moralists are apt to neglect the technical factors, the nature of the social system and the competence of those concerned, and to make an attack upon their piety and motives. We suggest that that is so in the case of this profit motive and public ownership question. The greater part of the evils that seem to arise from private ownership and the seeking of personal profit are in fact due to a defective money system and to antiquated ideas as to the relation of income and employment. Indeed the Malvern Conference seems to have perceived this in part, for, after the reference quoted above regarding production not to supply the consumer with goods but to bring profit to the producer, these words follow—'and the producer in turn is often subordinated to the purely financial ends of those who own the capital plant or supply the credit to erect or work it.' The last nine words are specially significant in view of the Archbishop of York's statement elsewhere: 'The "natural order" is that consumption should control production, and that production should control finance. This order has during the last century and a half been completely inverted' (*Christian News-Letter*, No. 41, Supplement). If the Archbishop is right in that statement, as most informed observers of affairs agree he is, does anything more need to be said to account for most of the perversions of agriculture and industry in our day, with all the consequent social anomalies and injustices? It is arbitrary to neglect that reversal of the natural order and pass quickly to the question of ownership which is largely irrelevant to it. It is premature to bring a moral indictment against the motives of producers and owners when the whole economic fabric is shot through with structural perversion.

8. As for work itself, whatever the nature of the ownership of the materials, we suggest that the motive of service to the community can be overstressed. There is need both for an immediate and for a wider outlook on the purpose of work, and these may be indicated briefly in two quotations from a study of the subject published a few years ago:

'We call work the human effort which creates useful goods, that is to say the effort which puts itself at the service of a piece of work, a creation of labour, itself destined for the service of humanity, an effort personal in its origin, but fraternal in its ends' (*A Philosophy of Work*, Borne and Henry, p. 98).

'Work, of a certainty, has its immediate purpose: it labours to make the world more human and humanity more fraternal, that is to say to make all as God Himself. But it also labours to create leisure in the shelter of which man will be able to hear and listen to the warm and intimate presence of God. Work also has a distant end or purpose to achieve: it labours that the desires of the body may be appeased, so that souls may devote themselves to the intimate and peaceful activity of contemplation. The six days of labour are a preparation for the divine repose of the seventh day. Also it is from this repose of the seventh day that labour emerges both more fruitful and more fraternal' (*op. cit.* p. 210).

Form Criticism and Gospel Study.

By Professor R. H. Lightfoot, D.D., New College, Oxford.

The Editor has invited me to contribute an article on Form Criticism of the Gospels, which should have more or less direct reference to that by Dr. F. J. Badcock on the same subject in the previous issue of The Expository Times. I was not very willing to comply; Dr. Badcock's article seems to me of strangely varying value in its different parts; and I have no wish to appear a champion of the claims put forward for Form Criticism. But since regret has been publicly expressed, both in America and in Germany, at the slowness of this country to recognize the importance of this recent development in New Testament studies, an attempt must be made to show why 'the whole basis of the form-criticism theory' seems to me unlikely 'to dissolve and vanish in a short time.'

In order to appreciate the new study and its methods, we must go back to the beginning of the present century. At that time 'liberal theology' in Gospel studies was in the ascendant, and its exponents were filled with a great hope, that of the discovery, or recovery, of 'plain biography.' As a result of more than one hundred years of minute, critical study of the first three Gospels, it was believed that two primary documents had been isolated from the mass of the material; and it was hoped that these two primary documents, Mark and Q, would prove bedrock for the ascertainment of the truth about our Lord. For His life, we were invited to study the simple and historically reliable narrative of St. Mark; while for His teaching we could turn to Q, supplemented by the special source of St. Luke. Harnack's course of sixteen lectures, delivered in the winter of 1899–1900 at Berlin, and translated into English under the title *What is Christianity?*, is the best expression of this phase of Gospel study, and of its religious value.

In the very next year, however, the axe was laid at the root of the tree. In a book which raised more questions than it solved, W. Wrede, a professor at Breslau, who died in 1906, showed that even Mark is by no means 'plain biography,' but reveals definite dogmatic interest, and contains in certain respects an already highly developed tradition. Wrede was speedily followed by Julius Wellhausen, whose 'brief and pregnant commentaries' on the Synoptic Gospels, with an accompanying volume of Introduction, contain, according to the late Professor J. M. Creed, writing in 1930, 'the seeds of the more important developments of recent years.' Both Wrede and Wellhausen urged that in estimating the contents of the Gospels we must consider also the circumstances and needs of those who first produced and used them, and that some allowance must be made for this factor. No doubt, in opening up untrodden paths, these scholars were guilty of over-emphasis and exaggeration; but they showed conclusively that the life and experiences of the Church, in the period before the Gospels took their present form, were not without influence upon the way in which the traditions were transmitted.

English scholars, however, were not quickly moved from the earlier method of study of the Gospels, of which an outline was traced above. Professor F. C. Burkitt's *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (1906) shows no clear sign of the coming change of interest; and this is true even of Dr. B. H. Streeter's *The Four Gospels* (1924), which may be regarded as the final and most complete expression in English of the methods and results of Source Criticism.

But indeed the tide had turned long before 1924. There has been little real advance in the purely literary study of the Gospels since the beginning of this century. Students have occupied themselves in testing the evidence more surely, in elaborating the proofs of their hypotheses, and in the effort to come to closer grips with the special sources of the First and Third Gospels. But the results have not been commensurate with the expenditure of labour. Very few Continental and American scholars, and by no means all in England, accept the Proto-Luke hypothesis, which remains extremely doubtful. Above all, the hope which inspired the research of fifty years ago has not been realized. Too many problems remain.

It is important to emphasize this, since the new study of Form Criticism is liable to misrepresentation and caricature, as in my opinion Dr. Badcock's article misrepresents and caricatures it, unless it is seen as the logical issue of that form of Gospel study which immediately preceded it. The work of Source Criticism, which has produced results of permanent value, is probably now upon the whole complete; and, rightly viewed, Form Criticism is

the natural and indeed inevitable development of the earlier study.

What then were the defects or imperfections in the earlier study, that is, the purely literary comparison of the Synoptic Gospels, the greatest triumph of which was the discovery of the priority of Mark? What were the questions raised by Wrede and Wellhausen, to which it could not give an answer? In a single sentence, literary criticism of the Gospels does not by itself take us back far enough. The span of at least a generation separates the earliest literary sources, of which we can be sure, from the life of Jesus Christ. If it is said that there must have been eye-witnesses of the ministry still living at the end of this period and indeed much longer, who will have kept the original tradition unimpaired, *i.e.* historically accurate, we are bound to notice how certain Marcan stories are altered in the First and Third Gospels, and to ask whether we are justified in assuming that such alterations in the tradition first began after Mark became well known. Rather, does not the treatment of Mark by the First and Third Evangelists suggest, either that the book was not regarded as too reliable for any alteration, or perhaps rather that other interests were at work in addition to that of the preservation of an exact historical tradition?

Again, when we consider the immense changes in the life of the Church which took place between, say, A.D. 35 and 65, changes in its constituent elements, its geographical extension, its language, its religious outlook, and when we recall that an oral tradition is naturally fluid, we find that we have to ask many questions, into which it was not necessary for Source Criticism, fully occupied with the literary comparison of the Gospels, to probe. Why did the Church produce Gospels, a form of writing peculiar to Christianity, and how do these books differ from a History? Why did this form of writing persist, long after the appearance of the Canonical Gospels, into an age when the later authors had no new reliable historical material to offer? What can we learn about the form or forms in which the tradition of the Lord's words and deeds was handed down? How far, if at all, have the later experiences of the Church affected the narration of His words and deeds? And last, not least, whatever other interests the Gospels were designed to serve, can we trust them also to give us a truly historical impression of the ministry, and the teaching, of the Lord?

No doubt such questions as these were in the background of men's thoughts long before the present generation; but it is only in the last twenty-five years that a critical and scientific attempt has been made to answer them, and there is bound to be some discomfort and uncertainty, especially for the older generation, as we adjust ourselves to the new study. The name Form Criticism is, indeed, unfortunate, since it suggests that the study is concerned only with the analysis of the Gospel material into the various forms, in which the tradition is found. This is, of course, a prominent part of the discipline, and in it some valuable results have been achieved. Thus it is now becoming widely recognized that, with the exception of the Passion narrative, which is likely to have been told from the first as a connected story, the Gospels consist for the most part of short stories, and that each such story was originally a separate unit. Even where, in our Gospels, a connecting link exists between one story and the next, there is reason to think that the link may be due to the Evangelist. Such topographical or chronological information as these links contain may of course be based on other tradition available to the Evangelist and as reliable as that of the stories which the links are used to join; but the links themselves probably did not originally form part of the stories now thus joined together. Karl Ludwig Schmidt, in a book which it is difficult to think that Dr. Badcock can have read, gave the first thorough demonstration of this important point. Again, stories originally separate, but having the same or a similar character or lesson, tend to be found joined together into groups; but we must not assume that the order, in which we now find the stories, is that in which the events narrated actually occurred; the motive in the arrangement seems to have been topical, rather than historical; thus we have the five 'conflict-stories' placed together in Mk 2^{1}–3^{6}, each containing or leading up to a 'Gospel-saying' of the Lord. We can sometimes trace the same methods at work in the arrangement of the sayings; thus in Mk $9^{38\text{-}50}$ one object seems to be to aid the memory by a system of 'link-words.'

But the new study does not confine itself to an analysis of the nature and form of the materials contained in the Gospels. Accepting the single story as the unit, it seeks to relate the several stories to the life of the Church which cherished and preserved them, and made use of them to convey its message to the world; and this promises to be the most valuable aspect of the method. In this way the Gospels can be to us not only the source of almost all our knowledge of the ministry of Jesus Christ, but also, within limits which need to

be carefully guarded, a mirror of the hopes and aspirations, the problems and the difficulties, of the Early Church. The stimulus and interest which has already been aroused by the method is due chiefly to this side of its work, which brings into clearer light than ever before the purely *religious* purpose of the Gospels. It also shows us why the Church, engrossed in its worship, its teaching and evangelistic work, its controversies and its hopes, was so little concerned, when handing on traditions of its Master's life, with details of time or place or chronological order, with interest in the names and biographies of most of those who came before Him, or with scene-painting for its own sake. In general, everything centres on a single point, and that a religious, Gospel-point.

It will readily be seen how liable the method is to exaggeration and abuse. Some of its exponents indeed have tended to assume that any story or saying, which could conceivably have been applied in an apologetic or dogmatic interest, is as likely as not to have been created for the purpose, and probably therefore has no foundation in fact. The tendency to modify the narrative for particular purposes is undoubtedly present in the Gospels, and was recognized long before Form Criticism was heard of; but there is no reason to think that it is present to a disconcerting degree, or to call in question the reliability of the record as a whole. Dr. B. S. Easton has shown in detail that we do not often find in the Lord's utterances during the ministry any clear traces of later developments. Thus it is well known how few are His references to the Holy Spirit, or to the Gentile mission. On the other hand, as regards those modifications which are certainly present, the new study shows for the first time in a clear light why they were made. The purpose was to reveal some Gospel-truth more clearly.

If I do not misunderstand him, Dr. Badcock would have us value the Gospels almost solely for their biographical worth, that is, as historical material for the Ministry, Passion, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, after a reference to Professor C. H. Turner's valuable studies of 'Marcan Usage,' written, among other purposes, in support of the second-century tradition which connects St. Mark's Gospel with St. Peter, Dr. Badcock concludes, 'In consequence the form of the stories may be due to the writer, or to the original narrator, in this case St. Peter.' We may certainly hope that the ultimate source of parts of Mark is indeed St. Peter, but a close study of this Gospel will suggest that the tradition must be used with caution, and I do not think that it can bear all the weight which Dr. Badcock would like to lay upon it. Again, Dr. Badcock writes, 'We have the express testimony of St. Luke that he . . . drew on the most primitive and authentic sources known to him (Lk 1^{1-4}).' Well, we have every reason to believe that one of the principal sources used by St. Luke was Mark, almost if not quite identical with the book which we have in our hands to-day. Let us then take one of the simplest and briefest sections of Mark, in which St. Peter himself plays a part, and let us consider St. Luke's treatment of it. We recall that St. Peter was the leader of the Twelve, and we should naturally expect that St. Luke, *if* his chief purpose was that which Dr. Badcock seems to imply, namely, to reproduce precisely the most primitive and authentic sources known to him, would treat a story, which he believed to be derived almost directly from the chief of the Apostles, with scrupulous and undeviating accuracy. But this is hardly what we find to be the case. Let us place Mk 1^{35-38} and its reproduction in Lk $4^{42f.}$ side by side, and compare the two passages. It may well be that St. Mark's narrative at this point is based, like other parts of Mk 1, ultimately on Petrine reminiscence; in any case, it is extremely lifelike. We infer from it that the Lord in the early morning, after a Sabbath of strain and labour in Capernaum, found it imperative to go away and pray; and that Simon and his three associates (Mk $1^{16-20.\ 29}$), resentful that their Leader should neglect the door thus wonderfully opened, as they thought, at Capernaum, tracked Him down and remonstrated with Him.

But in Luke it is the crowds who go in search of Him, and on finding Him beg Him not to leave them. A strange rendering of the story, surely, on the part of St. Luke, *if* his purpose was to write 'plain history.' Can we then trace the motives which may have caused St. Luke to make the change, and can we thereby reconcile to some extent the apparent divergence between him and his authority? We notice, first, that it is a special characteristic of St. Luke to emphasize the nearness of the Lord to 'the crowds' or 'the people,' and His great sympathy with them, and that in this Gospel the people constantly welcome Him and give Him loyal support; and the present passage is the first example of this tendency on the part of this Evangelist. Secondly, in the Marcan form of the story the four, in spite of Mk 1^{16-20}, do not act here as disciples, a word which does not occur in Mark till 2^{15}, but as interpreters of the actions and wishes of others; 'all are seeking thee.' Hence it may be

only a slight step when St. Luke deletes them, as intermediaries between the people and the Lord, entirely, and brings the crowds themselves upon the scene.

If this exegesis of the passage is correct, the gulf between the two Evangelists is not after all so great or so important as it may have seemed at first. None the less, with Mark before us, we are likely to feel that St. Luke's version deprives us of features of great value in the story; and certainly his version of it is not what we expect to-day from a writer of 'plain history.'

The consideration of this one example may have served to show how difficult and delicate are the problems which beset the student of the Gospels; how cautious and patient he must be; and how resolutely he must decline to accept probabilities or possibilities as certainties. A writer who can allow himself to say, 'It is now established that the Crucifixion took place in A.D. 33,' shows himself, I fear, an unsure guide in Gospel study. Presumably the statement is based on a perusal of Dr. G. Ogg's recent work, *The Public Ministry of Jesus*; but I think that no one would be more surprised than Dr. Ogg himself to learn that his book had 'established' beyond doubt the date of the Crucifixion; we may think that the probabilities incline to this date or to that, but the precise year remains a matter of conjecture.

Attention was invited, earlier in this article, to the *religious* significance seen by the new study in the various Gospel sections. Whether the study will help us to draw nearer to the central Figure of the Gospels, in His historical manifestation, we cannot say as yet; and in any case, as was pointed out above, Form Criticism had its origin in motives different from the hope which was the inspiration and driving force of Source Criticism, the hope, that is, of the recovery of 'plain biography.' Indeed, it came into existence largely through the failure of Source Criticism to realize this hope. We can, however, at least say that it is likely to increase our knowledge of the way in which the traditions of the ministry took place in the earliest period, and to show that they probably assumed more or less definite forms some considerable time before they came into the hands of the Evangelists. But the chief gain to religion from the new study will probably lie in a different direction. It will come through the emphasis of the new study on the vital connexion between the little sections, including the teaching, of the Gospels and the great fundamental, permanent Gospel themes of vocation, physical and spiritual restoration, life and death, love and hate, judgment and salvation. It was probably to the light thrown by the historical traditions on these great themes, even more than to their historical interest, that the traditions themselves owed their preservation; and if Form Criticism can show once more the vital connexion in this respect between the Gospels and the Gospel, it will have proved its value.

Literature.

FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION.

THE appearance of Principal Vincent Taylor's volume with this title (Macmillan: 10s. 6d. net) will be hailed with wide interest. For the sense of this eminent New Testament scholar and critic that it was a duty to write such a book corresponds to a sound instinct in the Church that one, who has expert knowledge of text and exegesis and of the problems concerning the authorship, historicity, and interrelation of the New Testament writings, has a special right to be heard when he brings this equipment to the service of dogmatic theology, a sphere in which it is only too possible for philosophic theologians to write voluminously without showing any profound knowledge of, or even interest in, the scriptures. Standing with his feet planted on the evangelist's record and the apostles' witness Dr. Taylor would challenge this generation as Denney challenged his to come to terms with the full implications of the gospel.

His plan is to examine the scriptural use of the great theological words describing Christian experience, forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, fellowship, sanctification, and others, bringing out the distinctions and special *nuances* with which they are employed, and then to show that everything that can thus be gathered together must be allowed and covered in any adequate and tenable theory of the Atonement. His closing chapter is

devoted to exhibiting how the theory of the Atonement which he has already put forward satisfies this claim and may accordingly command acceptance as valid and true. Taking His death as the culmination of the work of Christ, Dr. Taylor sees in it not only a revelation of love and an active moral influence on man but a representative ministry of Christ that has a Godward reference. He is thus in sympathy with the view of Denney, to whom he makes frequent allusion.

It is here possible to do little more than express admiration for the careful exhibition of the material and the patient skill of the exegetical treatment. In the treatment of forgiveness as 'remission' it might be worth while to ask whether a seeming neglect to develop or add the idea of reconciliation may not in some places be because 'forgiveness' itself contains a large and lively sense of the estrangement that is ended or averted. On the rendering of 'justify' by 'declare . . . righteous' or 'treat as righteous' it is doubtful if Dr. Taylor has made enough of Boylan's hint that it is 'a sort of creative act on God's part.' Even Denney was perhaps not so clear as he meant to be when he says in his commentary on Ro 4^5, 'Justification is not a fiction, legal, or other, but a miracle.' But he undoubtedly meant that the solution or dismissal of the problem comes with the recognition that God's word is creative. It is not possible to distinguish thinking, willing, and action in God or make real discrimination between what He does in the general or abstract and in the concrete and particular, or between what He declares and what He actually does. This matter was beautifully illumined in an exposition in this magazine, by Principal W. M. Macgregor, of the fourth beatitude, 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.' A repentant child wants to be told that it 'is good now,' and it is psychological fact that the kind, forgiving verdict *makes* it 'good.'

One general reflection of a somewhat critical kind will doubtless be made by some readers of this volume. Again and again Dr. Taylor acknowledges and proclaims that all these great words that he examines so closely describe in various aspects one indivisible Christian experience, the meaning of one word running out into that of another. Indeed a large and invaluable impression the book must make is that only by exploring the experience by the aid of all these clues will any realization be attained of its depth and fullness. And yet at times there is an uncomfortable feeling of being trained to an expertness like that required to drive five horses abreast; or being led to a doctrine that is not sprung from a root and poised on its stem, but stands like a table firm on all four legs. When Dr. Taylor says that all these fine distinctions and ramifications are extremely important and valuable to theology it is true of much theology, but it stirs in some minds the doubt whether that kind of theology is important or valuable in itself.

The only thing to deprecate in his rich final chapter is its finality. Sin has brought a surd into the universe, and this may mean that ultimately the problem of the Atonement is as insoluble in theory as the problem of evil; or at least that the solution is not by logic but by love in action, and that the true theory is that no theory is possible. Jesus, if any one, might be expected to have a rationale of the Cross, and that even He had none is proved by His cry of dereliction. Professor A. B. Macaulay, in his 'Death of Jesus,' has perhaps got nearer the heart of the matter than any one.

R. W. Stewart.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF MISSIONS.

A booklet, recently issued by the University of Aberdeen with the title of *Anthropology and the Future of Missions* and written by two members of the staff of the University, Professor John M. Graham and Dr. Ralph Piddington, has as its object a new and interesting experiment in co-operation between theology and anthropology. The aim of the booklet is 'to review the part which missions might play in a comprehensive and scientifically-planned scheme for colonial reorganization, particularly in Africa.' To achieve these ends a Bureau of Missions and Social Planning has been formed under the direction of the two scholars named, along with Sir John Orr and Professor Lancelot Hogben. Two further publications have since been issued in connexion with the Bureau dealing with specific problems.

This is an enterprise which will be warmly welcomed by all who are interested in missionary effort. Far too long the Colonies of the British Empire have been viewed simply as sources from which wealth may be derived by means of imperial trade. The welfare of the peoples of these Colonies has not always been given its right place as the governing consideration in the policies pursued. Now that our past neglect is generally admitted and measures are being taken in earnest to remedy it, it is right that the value of the work of missions

in this field should be recognized and their help sought for the many problems that colonial territories present. Both the anthropologist and the missionary can make valuable contributions to the understanding of the minds of the native peoples and of the significance of their customs and traditions. The value of these contributions will be all the greater if they issue from a co-operation which is based upon an appreciation by each of the aim which governs the work in which they are both engaged.

It is certain that most missionaries are quite as anxious as the anthropologists to maintain such elements of the indigenous inheritance as are not harmful to the highest interests of the individual or the tribe, but, on the contrary, are sources to them of comfort and strength and of a justifiable pride. The Christian message that the missionary brings to these people is, he believes, the means to the achievement of their highest interests and at the same time to the fulfilment of much that is already present at least potentially within their heritage. This is what the Tambaram Conference affirms when it declares that churches that grow up in the environment of non-Christian religions and cultures must indeed be 'firmly rooted in the Christian heritage,' but also 'in the soil of their own country.' How to combine these two aims without undermining and destroying the inheritance that comes to them from their ancestors and so inflicting serious injury upon them is a problem which may well require all the united wisdom of the missionary and the anthropologist to solve.

In one of the circulars issued by the Bureau the subject of how to convey scientific instruction to Africa wisely is discussed, and how in particular to achieve 'the nativization and Christianization of scientific education.' 'Sometimes,' the circular says, 'there will be inconsistency between them: for example, in the case of magico-religious elements in ancestor worship or the admission of magical or mythological beliefs in mission teaching. Such conflicts can only be resolved by the individual genius and comprehension of the man on the spot.' It is not easy to see how what can be described as 'magical' can have any place in a message, whether scientific or religious, which aims at setting men free from bondage. Would the scientist be content to leave the Punjab villager believing—as he sometimes does—that manure is 'a new god,' so long as he uses it on his fields?

It is, perhaps, not 'individual genius' that is needed in order to answer these questions but such sympathy with the people concerned as will be willing to labour to understand the working of their minds and will guide them with much patience into the land of promise. While we must never scorn even their superstitions and must seek to persuade their minds and hearts rather than to domineer over their wills, there are certain things in regard to which tolerance or compromise is impossible. It is no easy matter to find the right road in such conditions—to be true, on the one hand, to 'the kindred points of heaven and home,' knowing them to be fixed points, and, on the other hand, to preserve those sanctities that have come down from the past with so much that is warm and comforting and protective about them. Professor Graham in the comments he contributes on the Christian approach to the teaching of science indicates the general direction to be taken by the missionary when he tells us that he must lead his people to 'new forms of social unity based not upon fear of the unknown and incalculable but upon confident work for positive human ends.'

A simple example may illustrate how a change of atmosphere may be brought about, which is more important than any change in legal machinery. In the lands of the primitive peoples it is often the custom of the peasant to carry on his work to the accompaniment of impromptu songs. A well-known Indian missionary, Dr. R. A. Hume, used to tell how the man drawing water from the well to irrigate his field would sing to his bullocks what was often a sorrowful song of fear and foreboding. So the missionary gave the people instead new songs sung in their own fashion and to their own tunes but lifting their hearts to a God who cared for them. It may not be always necessary to change the old song for a new one, but it mostly is. An Indian writer gives this translation of a song that the ploughman, he says, sings as he guides the furrow:

> Till my heart, O Beloved,
> As I am tilling this land,
> And make me thine,
> As I am making this land my own.

But Mr. F. L. Brayne, the Punjab Commissioner who has done so much for the remaking of village India, writes from intimate knowledge when he says: 'The whole outlook of the villager and all his ideals must be changed.' One way of changing his outlook and his ideals is 'to put a new song in his mouth even praise unto his God.'

It is immensely important to make the peasant's songs, but we cannot be content to let who will make his laws. The anthropologist is more likely to be helpful in this matter than in the other, and here co-operation between him and the missionary may be

specially valuable. In a study of Bemba marriage by a distinguished anthropologist that has just appeared we are told of the breakdown of morals resulting in large measure from 'the strange mixture of standards brought about by Christian teaching.' The question presses urgently upon us as to how the transition may take place, from the rigour of the old tribal code to the freedom that brings with it the opportunity of moral growth, without involving as its consequence moral disaster and anarchy. Must the old sanctions pass and leave the individual detribalized or denationalized and therefore lonely and desolate? Mahatma Gandhi said in a speech four years ago: 'I am inundated with letters from young men about their evil habits and the void that their unbelief has made in their lives. I can only tell them there is no way but that of surrender to, and trust in, God and His grace.' There is a difference between the case of the educated Hindu and the African tribesman, but at the same time a fundamental similarity. In both cases what Mr. Gandhi prescribes is the central necessity, but is there not also a secondary protection obtainable without moral injury by means of ancestral laws and customs?

One of the circulars issued by the Bureau of Missions and Colonial Planning is a paper by Professor Graham on *Christianity and Civilization*. The inclusion of this paper shows that this Bureau is not limiting its help to questions that arise at what we may call the animistic level but is ready to give guidance to the missionary whose work is among those on a higher plane of religious reflection. While the Professor of Systematic Theology in Aberdeen University deals only incidentally with mission work his discussion has much relevance to problems that arise in relation to the great world religions. Just as the missionary needs help in dealing with the tribal customs of the unlettered masses, so he needs help in dealing with the religious heritage of the Hindu, the Buddhist, and the Muslim. And even more urgently the thoughtful Indian or Chinese Christian needs this help, and he is asking for it. The 'Christian Society for the Study of Hinduism' has begun the issue of a quarterly called 'The Pilgrim,' which is meant to help Indian evangelists along these lines, and the Bureau may find points of contact between its aims and those of this Indian publication.

There are those who urge that the one way to deal with the ethnic religions is to attack them, and there are those who consider that as the creation of a people's soul such a religion is sacrosanct. The second of these two attitudes has recently been stated with authority and persuasiveness by Professor Hocking of Harvard in his book, 'Living Religions and a World Faith,' and his arguments require to be examined all the more as they are the arguments of one who is no enemy of Christian missions. We need to reconsider the basis of the Christian mission in the light of those powerful tendencies that are abroad in the world to-day and to see more clearly how the Biblical revelation is related to the 'values' in the great world faiths.

One suggestion that may be made to the Bureau is that its assistance may be effectively conveyed to the missionary not only by the publication of papers but by arranging for conferences in which questions affecting missionary policy may be discussed together by missionaries and anthropologists. Several such conferences were arranged some years ago by the Student Christian Movement and proved useful not only to missionaries but also to those who were contemplating service in Colonial areas, both under Government and in commerce.

NICOL MACNICOL.

NIEBUHR AND PACIFISM.

Professor G. H. C. Macgregor, D.Litt., D.D., of Glasgow University, is a well-known writer with definite and uncompromising pacifist convictions. He has already stated his position fully in print, but in his recently published book, *The Relevance of the Impossible* (Fellowship of Reconciliation; 2s. net), he sets out to combat the anti-pacifism of Reinhold Niebuhr. It may be said at once that he has no difficulty in effectually disposing of Niebuhr's two main contentions. One is his extreme doctrine of human depravity, according to which man is so corrupted by sin as to be incapable, even if he would, of the sublimation of his selfish and anti-social instincts which obedience to the ethic of Jesus would demand. The other is Niebuhr's view that Jesus' teaching envisages a Kingdom of God wholly transcendent and future, and that His perfectionist ethic therefore has no immediate relevance to the practical problems of to-day. It seems like whipping a dead horse to discuss these extreme statements, and if anti-pacifists had no better ground to stand on their cause would be in a bad way.

Dr. Macgregor is greatly helped also by certain concessions which Niebuhr makes—quite unnecessarily, most people would say. Niebuhr admits, for example, that Jesus' teaching is definitely pacifist. He also admits that pacifists are right in asserting that love is the law of life, though

the value of that depends entirely on how you interpret love. Finally, he finds a certain value in pacifism and a real place for pacifists in the Church. In addition, he draws attention to the peril of compromising with the Absolute, as well as to the tragic results of invoking religion in support of a war effort. Thus Niebuhr most kindly does everything in his power to assist any possible critic of his views.

I confess, however, that I find him quite unconvincing where he comes to deal with the real points at issue. Two of these Dr. Macgregor states in clear terms. One is that pacifists demand with reference to this one moral issue (of war) an absolute obedience to the perfectionist ethic which they are not prepared to give over the whole range of life. The other is that on this issue they are prepared to separate themselves from the community of their fellow-citizens, while continuing to claim the advantages accruing from membership of that community. I have not found in these pages any real answer to this double charge. I would repudiate nearly all Niebuhr's 'concessions,' as well as his pessimistic dualism and his eschatological view of the Kingdom of God. But the two points stated above seem to me irrefutable. They are not the only grounds for rejecting the pacifist position. But dialectically they are sufficient.

At the same time one must gladly acknowledge the honesty, earnestness, and ability of Dr. Macgregor's book. At a time like this, and in face of such a total tragedy and menace to which we have all to relate ourselves, it will at any rate bring us face to face with reality. F. J. Rae.

The Christian Literature Society for India has published a really excellent book on *The Kingdom of God*, by the Rev. H. V. Martin, M.A., B.D. (8 annas). It is just what a primary text-book ought to be—clear, orderly, and well balanced. The writer has evidently given much study to the subject and his booklet has more value than many a bigger treatise. He does not disdain to give simple notes explaining the meaning of various technical terms, and does not assume, as theological and other experts are so apt to do, that their lay readers are familiar with the terminology. This is a most valuable little book which deserves a wide circulation, and not in India only.

As It Happened (Dent; 12s. 6d. net) is the title given to his autobiography by Mr. Maurice B. Reckitt. He writes his life story in a captivating way, with a pleasing combination of modesty and candour. The interest of the book deepens and its tone grows more serious as it proceeds. The writer is of that doubtfully fortunate class of those who have no need to work for their living, and he has been able to have his full share of the enjoyments which come through ample leisure. Accordingly we have chapters on dancing, games, and travel in which, as the writer suggests, 'those who might later be looking round for materials to help them in reconstructing some of the obscurer phases of these years' may find something to throw into the melting pot. But in Mr. Reckitt's life much more serious interests have predominated, and he justly claims some credit for 'availability' for useful tasks which busier men have no leisure to undertake. As an Anglo-Catholic his supreme interest has been the application of the Christian faith to the framing of a new and better social order, and to this cause he has rendered long and faithful service. With full consciousness of the critical nature of the times he is saved by his faith from undue pessimism. 'I do not know and have no power to guess by what means Europe will struggle to re-establish true aims for its corporate life, or to achieve a discrimination in the use of its unprecedentedly complex resources. But I believe that through whatever tribulation it will so struggle; and if the process means a long journey through the darkness, I remember that the Dark Ages were the crucible of Christendom.' Altogether a pleasing record of an attractive personality and of a happy and useful life.

The Edinburgh House Press has begun the issue of a series of pamphlets on 'World Issues' (3d. net). Three of these have come to hand. The first, *Towards a New Order*, by the Rev. Cecil Northcott, makes a fitting introduction to the series. It indicates that, while many are now talking about a new world order, the Christian Church through its world-wide missions has been making a real contribution towards the uplift of the nations and the cause of human brotherhood. The pamphlet is packed with samples of the fruits of Christian missions and makes out a really impressive case.

The second pamphlet, *New Life in China*, by Winifred Galbraith, gives an encouraging picture of the progress of the Chinese Church in war-time, and the manifold services which pastors and members have been able to render to their suffering people. 'One thing is certain. The Church in China no longer feels that Christianity, with its message of triumph in suffering, is a foreign creed.

She has taken it as her own. Slowly she is making rituals and forms of worship in which she feels at home, slowly she is creating her own hymns and melodies and her own theology, painfully finding her own words and terms as the truth burns into her soul.'

The most dramatic of the pamphlets, *With Chinese Communists*, by Stanton Lautenschlager, tells the story of a visit to Yenan beyond the Yellow River, the headquarters of the Ninth Route Army, where great communities are housed in caves dug in the mountain-sides, and where centres of industry, commerce, and learning are fully organized. The Communism described is moderate and in many respects admirable. It is little more than co-operation in social and national effort, and much sympathy and openness of mind is expressed for Christian teaching. These pamphlets are attractively got up, well written, and most informative.

Canon Roger Lloyd of Winchester has written a short pamphlet entitled *God and World History* (Epworth Press ; 4d. net), in which he seeks in a fresh and interesting way to show that 'the meek, that is those who value goodness before any other quality because they love God, and who take their idea of what goodness actually is from what they understand of the teaching of Jesus Christ, these do inherit the earth. They inherit it because, in the fullness of time, all other possible claimants fall out of the race, and because they alone have the necessary patience and staying power.'

In *The Christian Church and the Prisoner in English Experience*, by Mr. T. Edmond Harvey, M.P., M.A. (Epworth Press ; 2s. 6d. net), we have the 'Beckly Lecture' for 1941. There is an interesting review of the progress of prison reform, and a suggestion of what still remains to be done to make prison life really remedial. Mr. Harvey speaks from a very full experience of his subject personally, and both the historical part of his lecture and the practical part will be read with interest and profit.

In the Mill, by Mr. John Masefield (Heinemann ; 7s. 6d. net), is 'a chapter of autobiography.' It tells of early experiences of the poet-laureate when he worked as a 'hand' in an American mill. There is a great deal about the mill and its fabrics, and this is a little dull. But there is much else which is interesting, and chiefly the revelation of the inner life of the youth who, while labouring faithfully at his task, was consumed by a thirst for knowledge. He tells us how he came upon books which opened a new world to him. From the first he had a passion for natural beauty, a love of the sea and of ships, and a craving for entrance into the larger world which could only come to him through literature. Along with all this there grew up in him an ambition to write. He is modest about his early performances, but he persisted in spite of what seemed to him failure. And he has some of the quaintest advice ever given to young writers. He advises them to read dictionaries daily, to help them to use the noblest words in their precisest meanings. His own efforts to improve himself remind us of R. L. Stevenson when he played 'the sedulous ape' to various great authors. Perhaps the most attractive feature of this naïve book is its disclosure of a simple, sincere, passionate soul seeking to know and to love and to do great things.

One Lord, One People, by Archbishop Temple (Lutterworth Press ; 4d. net), is a brief address on Christian unity, with appropriate Scripture reading and prayers. It calls attention to the Five Peace Points laid down by the Pope and also the summary of Christian social principles contained in the report of the non-Roman conference held in Oxford. It is an earnest plea for a Christian Britain which shall become an instrument for promoting the Kingdom of God throughout the world.

Professor L. W. Grensted has written a very attractive little book—*Jesus and Our Need* (S.P.C.K. ; 1s. 6d. net). It is very simple, and is really more a personal witness than an argument. The four chapters are: The Christian Faith, Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus and His Friends, and Jesus Christ To-day. The book is meant to commend Jesus to inquiring minds and to tell what He has meant to one of them. The second chapter contains an admirable account of the earthly life and ministry of Christ.

Some Moral Difficulties of the Bible, by the Venerable H. E. Guillebaud, M.A. (Inter-Varsity Fellowship ; 3s. 6d.), was still incomplete when the author died in Africa a year ago. Some of the chapters have been completed from the notes he left. The difficulties treated are such as commonly arise in connexion with moral evil and suffering, Old Testament views of God, and various incidents in the New Testament, such as the Gadarene demoniac and the barren fig tree. The general attitude of the writer is very conservative throughout, his thought does not go very deep, but is generally wise and reverent.

Is it Possible to Write a Life of Christ?

Some Aspects of the Modern Problem.

By Principal Vincent Taylor, Ph.D., D.D., Wesley College, Headingley, Leeds.

I.

The question stated above puts in a pointed form a problem presented by the latest stages of the criticism of the Gospels, and especially by Form Criticism. It is probably too early for any one student to answer it completely; and one of the advantages of this short series of articles, of which the present article is the first, is the opportunity it affords of comparing different answers or different presentations of the same answer.

It must have been observed by all who are interested in New Testament problems that, during the last twenty-five years, the veritable spate of attempts to delineate the Life of Jesus has given place to a slow stream, and more recently to a mere trickle. How has this change come to pass?

Form Criticism is by no means the only influence which has created this situation. It is well known that the late Canon Sanday passed away in 1920 'without having written a page of what was to have been the great work of his life, a critical life of Christ.'[1] His wisdom and insight had been devoted to those preliminary studies which he has left as a priceless legacy, relating to the text of the New Testament, Synoptic Criticism, the Fourth Gospel, the Virigin Birth, the problem of miracles, Eschatology, and the modern presentation of the Person of Christ. Subsequently, much progress has been made in promising tentative solutions of some of the problems enumerated above; yet, even so, many of these problems call for repeated study and an open mind. The foundations have been well and truly laid, but they demand constant scrutiny.

Since 1919 Form Criticism has emphasized the difficulties. That the Gospel of Mark provided a firm outline for the life of Jesus had been the assumption of radical critics. This 'Markan Hypothesis,' indeed, was one of the greatest obstacles to a scientific appreciation of the valuable historical elements in the Fourth Gospel. But, with Form Criticism, the 'Markan Hypothesis' went up in smoke! Instead of providing a reliable framework for the Gospel Story, Mark was an artificial compilation upon which, as Wrede had taught, the Evangelist had imposed the theory of 'the Messianic Secret.' Instead of possessing a necklace, we had merely a heap of pearls. The isolated units of tradition, it was said, had been shaped by the practical, apologetic, and doctrinal interests of the Church, and the only piece of early continuous narrative was the account of the Passion. '*La tradition évangélique tout entière,*' wrote M. Cullmann, '*a été créée et transformée par la communauté primitive.*'[2]

The remorseless words in which Karl Ludwig Schmidt ended his *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (1919) made a deep impression on the minds of New Testament scholars. 'The stories of Jesus,' he wrote, 'lie for the most part on one and the same plane. Only now and then, from considerations about the inner character of a story, can we fix these somewhat more precisely in respect of time and place. But as a whole, there is no Life of Jesus in the sense of an evolving biography, no chronological sketch of the Story of Jesus, but only single narratives, *pericopae*, which are put into a framework' (p. 317). In his book entitled *Jesus* (1926), R. Bultmann was more trenchant: 'I am of the opinion, that of the life and personality of Jesus we know next to nothing, since the Christian sources have no interest in these things and are overgrown by legend, and since other sources about Jesus do not exist' (p. 12). It is not surprising that such sceptical views left their mark on subsequent attempts to relate the facts of the life of Christ. When, for example, in 1927, Professor S. J. Case, of Chicago, wrote his *Jesus—A New Biography*, he renounced the attempt to give a detailed sketch of events and concentrated his attention on the task and the religion of Jesus, setting up new standards by which to judge the tradition. 'Every statement in the records,' he wrote, 'is to be judged by the degree of its suitableness to the distinctive environment of Jesus, on the one hand, and to that of the framers of Gospel tradition at one or another stage in the history of Christianity,

[1] Dr. A. Plummer, The Expository Times, xxxii. 151 f.

[2] Cited by Lagrange, *Évangile selon saint Marc*, lvi.

on the other' (p. 115). It is not surprising that, with such a test as 'our safest guide,' the results were extremely meagre. The work was not 'a new biography,' but an essay, and a valuable essay, on the mind and ministry of Jesus. M. Goguel has illustrated the embarrassment in which Catholic critical scholars found themselves. Thus, he quotes Lagrange as saying: 'I have definitely given up the idea of giving a *Life of Jesus* to the public according to the classical formula, in order that the four Gospels may speak more clearly for themselves'; 'they form the only *Life of Jesus* which can be written; all we have to do is to understand them.'[1] It would not be fair to allow this quotation to stand without referring to the spirited attack of Lagrange upon the more radical exponents of Form Criticism, and of this something will be said later. Nevertheless, the barb sticks. Lagrange has bequeathed to us invaluable commentaries, but not a Life of Jesus. And in this respect his action is characteristic of conservatives and liberals alike. It has been left to Goguel to fight a rearguard engagement. How many critical *Lives* have appeared since he wrote his *Vie de Jésus* in 1932?

II.

It is clear that Form Criticism has dried up the stream of Leben-Jesu-Research. Nevertheless, many New Testament critics have not bowed the knee to Baal. By the brook Cherith the ravens have brought them bread and flesh and they have breathed a purer air upon Horeb.

Mention has been made of Lagrange, and it will be useful at this point to recall his comments on the work of Cullmann. In this new phase of criticism, he declares, we have fallen back into the romantic fancy of a creative community, which, in fact, has no scientific existence. The unconscious work of this community, it is claimed, served the ends of primitive Christianity, worship, praise, and prayer. 'But was there no one,' he asks, 'to direct the prayer and the praise?' The community met the needs of teaching, 'apparently without masters,' and those of missionary preaching and apologetic discussion, presumably 'without preachers and doctors'! How foolish it is to assume that an Evangelist is just a sonorous echo of the sentiments of the people! 'The crowd,' he repeats with M. Lejeay, 'has never created anything.' If the evangelic tradition is a creation of the community believing in the myth of Christ, we must lay down our arms to those who deny the historical existence of Jesus. To Lagrange, however, this denial of the existence of the greatest personality of history is the crowning absurdity. 'Let us leave the dilettantes,' he says, 'to take pleasure in it!' (*op. cit.*, lvii. f.).

In Great Britain we take a long time to make up our minds; we may be sure, but we are slow. It is twenty years since the late Canon Streeter suggested the Proto-Luke Hypothesis, and we have not yet come to a decision about this comparatively simple source-theory. Happily, Form Criticism has to some extent stirred us out of our lethargy, and opinions have been expressed which are highly significant. Almost the last words from the pen of the late Professor F. C. Burkitt repeat his oft-considered judgment on the historical value of Mark. In reviewing Sundwall's *Die Zusammensetzung des Markusevangeliums* (1934), he wrote:[2]

> 'In opposition to the opinion of many scholars I feel that Mark is a Biography, if by Biography we mean the chief outlines of a career, rather than a static characterization. In Mark there is movement and progression. . . . It does not sound to me like *Gemeindetheologie*, the unconscious secretion of a community of believers. Nothing but a strong element of personal reminiscence could ever have produced it. And therefore I still hold to the belief that it embodies the private reminiscences of Peter, supplemented for the last week by the reminiscences of the young Mark himself.'

Side by side with this wise judgment may be placed that of Dr. W. F. Howard in an important article in the *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* (July 1927):

> 'The verisimilitude of the development of the ministry as given in Mark is a miracle of artistry if it cannot be traced back to the coherent memory of a writer who recorded the story as he had heard it from one who was himself no small part in the developing drama' (p. 79).

Mention must also be made of the opinion of Professor A. H. McNeile in his *Introduction to the New Testament*, published also in 1927:

> 'But if, as is probable, the general course of the history as we have it was due mainly to the preaching and teaching of the first disciples, although individual stories and sayings were undoubtedly handed down orally as isolated units, for which the evangelists found places in such a way as to suit their several purposes, yet the main outline must go back to the reminiscences of eyewitnesses' (p. 451).

[1] *The Life of Jesus* (Eng. tr.), 60.

[2] *Journal of Theological Studies*, April 1935, pp. 186–8.

This opinion, it should be recalled, is offered with direct reference to the views of K. L. Schmidt.

Finally, the article of Professor C. H. Dodd in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, June 1932, on 'The Framework of the Gospel Narrative,' calls for special notice. In this article, which also examines the views of Schmidt, Professor Dodd draws attention to the generalizing summaries (*Sammelberichte*) in Mark, which serve as links between the separate episodes in that portion of the Gospel where there is least inner connexion between them. He prints the following: $1^{14f.\ 21f.\ 39}$ 2^{13} 3^{7b-19} $4^{33f.}$ $6^{7.\ 12f.\ 30}$, as a continuous whole, and then observes: 'The striking thing here is the way in which the summaries fall naturally into something very like a continuous narrative,' and he concludes that 'Mark had an outline, itself also traditional, to which he attempted to work, with incomplete success' (p. 399).

> 'Thus (he says) we need not be so scornful of the Marcan order as has recently become the fashion, though we shall not place in it the implicit confidence it once enjoyed. . . . It is hazardous to argue from the precise sequence of the narrative in detail; yet there is good reason to believe that in broad lines the Marcan order does represent a genuine succession of events, within which movement and development can be traced' (p. 400).

The quotations given above are not introduced as *ex cathedra* utterances, but as significant expressions of opinions which indicate the reaction of the best British New Testament scholars to the more radical claims of continental Form Criticism.

Important, however, as these judgments are, they are opinions and not more. No one has built upon them. The universities of Great Britain are silent. No one apparently has the knowledge, imagination, and, above all, the courage to face failure in the attempt to re-tell the Story of Stories to a dying world. We discuss everything and construct nothing. Some of us prefer to debate Pacifism, Communism, and Psychotherapy. We do not weave our critical views into a connected whole, and say: 'That is the Story as I see it. Make of it what you will.' In part, of course, this situation is due to a healthy caution. We do not want to say more than we mean, and there are hundreds of details about which we feel that we need to think, and to think again. Let us, however, not deceive ourselves. The main cause of silence is a subtle kind of intellectual and spiritual sloth. Or is it that we have a strong suspicion that Schweitzer was right when he wrote: 'There is no historical task which so reveals a man's true self as the writing of a Life of Jesus.'[1]

III.

It will be of advantage to consider some of the difficulties which confront any one who dares to write a Life of Christ. Some of these difficulties have always confronted the historian; others to-day are more easy of solution, thanks to the progressive study of the Gospels.

1. Fortunately, we can proceed with the knowledge that we have at our disposal a relatively stable and authoritative text. The labours of textual critics, among whom English-speaking scholars have played a notable part, have given to us a text which, in substance, is reliable for the purposes of a historical inquiry.

2. Source Criticism, also, has reached widely accepted results. That Mark is the primitive Gospel, and that the later Synoptists used Mark and Q, are views which few would dispute, and there is increasing recognition of the fact that Matthew used a second collection of sayings and parables (M), and that Luke drew upon a special cycle of Cæsarean tradition (L). From Form Criticism we have gained a fresh appreciation of the primitive and continuous character of the Passion-narrative, and a deeper insight into the historical conditions in which the earliest tradition was shaped.

3. Some of the thorny problems of the Fourth Gospel are much nearer solution. We no longer argue about the date of this Gospel, and most of us believe that, while it enshrines valuable traditions connected with the witness of the Apostle John, it was compiled by a younger Ephesian writer who, with the insight of genius, interpreted the tradition in the light of a singularly living Christian experience, his own and that of the Church at Ephesus.

4. So far as the Johannine sayings are concerned, there is also progress to record. We no longer think of them as conscious inventions; the agreement in thought and expression with the Synoptic sayings is too close to permit us to explain them as anything less than 'interpretations,' the fruit of meditation and experience, of things which Jesus was remembered to have said. We cannot, then, neglect these sayings in forming a judgment concerning His teaching, mission, and person. Nevertheless, the historical critic, far more than the theologian, is faced with difficulties of procedure. He desires to record what Jesus thought and said; and he cannot quote these sayings as His actual

[1] *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, 4.

words. For long this difficulty has been held to be insuperable; but, unless I am mistaken, with a fuller appreciation of what the writing of history means—as involving, that is to say, no mere string of facts and statements, but an intelligent appreciation of the personality and of the living issues with which he deals—his task is not the labour of Sisyphus it has often seemed to be.

5. Another difficulty which faces the historian is the problem of the Virgin Birth. He cannot set it aside by saying that the acceptance of this tradition is not essential to belief in the divinity of Christ. That plea is the privilege of the theologian. The historian must either record that Jesus was the miraculously conceived Son of the Virgin Mary or present Him as the Son of Joseph, although, in this case, having regard to the place of Jesus in history, he is not precluded from affirming His supernatural origin. No one can blame him if he elects to say that the Virgin Birth tradition is 'Not Proven,' but, if he does so, he will be sadly conscious that his work as a historian is not complete. In 1920, in *The Historical Evidence for the Virgin Birth*, I attempted to give a judicial estimate of the bearings of the historical problem, and I cannot say that to-day I should wish to alter the conclusions there stated in any essential particular. But the hope I then expressed, that theology might be able to aid historical criticism, has not been fulfilled; and it seems increasingly improbable that a critical Life of Christ will be able to find room for the Virgin Birth tradition.

6. Closely related to the question of the Virgin Birth is the problem of the Gospel miracles. In this matter also the historian must find a *modus vivendi*. For him the difficulties are by no means ended if he believes, as he may well believe, that miracles are not inherently impossible. He has still to decide whether the narratives in the Gospels are to be taken as they stand or whether, in any given case, it is probable that in the history of the tradition natural circumstances have been given a miraculous interpretation. He cannot solve the problem by classifying the events he is called upon to discuss as *contra naturam* or *supra naturam*; for he knows too little about God and the universe to be able to say what is *contrary to* or what is *beyond* nature; and if he believes the personality of Jesus to be divine, he cannot disregard those historical limitations which encompassed the Incarnate life of the Son of God. He gains not the slightest comfort or guidance from the suggestion that miracles like the Feeding of the Five Thousand or The Raising of Lazarus 'present no insuperable difficulties, if the Lord was indeed God incarnate,' for he knows perfectly well that, if he were to accept this principle, he would be compelled to delineate a docetic Christ masquerading in human flesh. His problem is that he is called upon to describe the life of One whose personality is absolutely unique, and yet a life which the records show to have been wholly and completely human. He must also allow for those historical perversions and distortions which affect even the best of sources, and from which he has no reason to suppose that the Gospels are free. In such circumstances he will be wise always to confess that in any particular judgment he may be mistaken, but he will help neither his readers nor the course of future research unless he states clearly the conclusions to which his studies have led. In respect of the miracles of healing he will have few difficulties, nor do I think he will find it hard to describe the circumstances which lie behind narratives like the Daughter of Jairus and the Widow's Son at Nain. In stories like the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the Raising of Lazarus he will not, I think, be able to avoid the risks of rationalizing, and, in the case of the latter, his treatment will be influenced by his estimate of the character of the narrative tradition in the Fourth Gospel. The narrative of the Empty Grave will probably present him with his most difficult problem, for the belief that after His death Jesus appeared objectively to His disciples does not solve that riddle. It is clear that on every hand the historian's path is sown with mines and pitfalls. Complete success he cannot achieve, and even relative progress is possible only if he is wise, judicial, and very courageous.

7. A further problem, and one of the greatest difficulty, is that of weaving together the various narratives, sayings, and parables so as to obtain a relatively ordered sequence, with turning points in the story all leading to the final crisis. The beginnings of the sequence are easy to fix. After a sketch, admittedly fragmentary, of the nativity and childhood of Jesus, the story continues with the ministry of John the Baptist, the Baptism of Jesus, the Temptation, a short stay in Judæa, and the opening of the preaching in Galilee. Thanks to the Markan Passion narrative, the close of the story is also comparatively easy to determine. But how are the ends to be pieced together, and to what extent is ingenious conjecture regarding the progress of events permissible? The great day near Cæsarea Philippi (Mk 8^{27ff}) is obviously the watershed of the whole; but how is the terrain on either side to be filled in and presented? And is the

period to be covered one year, or two, or three? These questions are not easy to answer. The attempt to include the separate items of the tradition within a framework of two or three years is foredoomed to failure, in view of the lack of adequate topographical and chronological information, while the proposal to limit the story to a single year is opposed, not only by the Fourth Gospel, with its three Passovers, but also by elements within the Synoptics themselves. In consequence, anything like a closely articulated chronological scheme must be renounced; in many cases the grouping of material is unavoidable. The defects of such a method are obvious, but they are less serious than might be supposed. The relative order of the Confession of Peter and the Transfiguration is important, but what does it matter where the Markan story of the Leper is recorded, so long as it is assigned to a relatively early point in the Galilean Ministry? In the course of teaching many of the Johannine narratives have been developed to such a degree that it is impossible to include them, as they stand, in a continuous story; and, in consequence, the necessity of dovetailing them within a framework does not arise. They are important for our estimate of Jesus, not for the details of His career. Again, the special narrative tradition of Matthew is of the greatest interest in the attempt to describe the history of the tradition; for a scientific treatment of the Life of Jesus it is almost useless. These considerations substantially reduce the difficulties of historical reconstruction. The sayings-tradition is another matter. In Q there is a relative order which corresponds roughly with the succession of events, but M and L are formless. To some extent the recent critical study of the Parables by A. T. Cadoux, C. H. Dodd, and B. T. D. Smith affords help, because much of this material is seen to be directly associated with the purposes of Jesus. In the end it is in the historian's grasp of these purposes that he will find, or fail to find, his main clue. His Ariadne's thread is his conviction of what Jesus sought to accomplish by His preaching, life, death, and resurrection. The life of Christ is His work.

8. Finally, therefore, we come to the greatest difficulty of all, that of forming an adequate judgment of the Person of Christ and of His work. The day has gone by, it is to be hoped, when any one can be so foolish as to think that he can tell the Story of Jesus without the aid of a theology. Without a dogmatic interest the writing of a Life of Christ is impossible. Such an opinion would have counted as critical blasphemy in the eyes of the representatives of the Liberal-Jesus-School. In their view complete detachment from considerations of theology was an indispensable condition for the writing of a Life of Christ; for them there was no greater reproach than to describe such a work as 'dogmatic.' Perhaps one of the greatest of the many services they have rendered to criticism is the proof they have given of the falsity of their presuppositions. They are condemned by their achievements. They sought to depict Christ, and they succeeded in describing a Galilean prophet who never existed. It is to Schweitzer that we ought to ascribe the honour of having spoken the liberating word, for it is he who wrote:

> 'What has now to be done, therefore is, in contradistinction to Wrede, to make a critical examination of the dogmatic element in the life of Jesus on the assumption that the atmosphere of the time was saturated with eschatology, that is, to keep in even closer touch with the facts than Wrede does, and moreover, to proceed, not from the particular to the general, but from the general to the particular, carefully considering whether the dogmatic element is not precisely the historical element. For, after all, why should not Jesus think in terms of doctrine, and make history in action, just as well as a poor Evangelist can do it on paper, under the pressure of the theological interests of the primitive community.'[1]

Of course, it will be necessary to consider 'the dogmatic element' more broadly than Schweitzer has done, and by no means limit it to Eschatology. The entire background of Old Testament and later Jewish thought must be studied. Nevertheless, the principle, that Jesus thought 'in terms of doctrine' and made 'history in action,' is the clue to a scientific delineation of His career. Not for a moment does this principle mean that we are to attempt to portray His life in terms suggested by the Tome of Leo, or to speak of things which He did as God and things which He suffered as Man. The Theology of Chalcedon describes in the best terms we have yet discovered the ultimate significance of His Person, but not the conditions under which the Incarnate Life was manifested on earth. For this reason the theologian can do us no better service than to discuss again and again the doctrine of the Kenosis, without, let us hope, pressing against it those objections which, if logically applied, would be equally fatal to the doctrine of the Incarnation itself. Without some form of Kenosis doctrine the writing of a Life of Christ is

[1] *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, 348.

foredoomed. Equally important is the doctrine of the Atonement, if we include in it, as we must, the life, death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus. How Jesus faced death, in what manner He related it to His teaching concerning the Kingdom of God, what service He believed would be accomplished for men by His dying and rising again, these are some of the questions which must be answered, with perfect fidelity to the Gospel tradition, albeit with an insight which sometimes transcends what is written, before any attempt to picture the Life of Lives can possess the realism of history.

IV.

Who is sufficient for these things? No one. As always every attempt to write a Life of Christ will be a failure; but with courage, faith, knowledge, and insight, the succession of failures will less deserve the name; each will point the way to something better. It is given to no one to succeed in this audacious and desperate enterprise, but a company of pioneers, each working alone, and yet in concert with others, and each equipped with the fullest knowledge of the Gospels, the Epistles, the history of doctrine, world history, and the human heart, may yet be able to tear away the mask of the Incognito which for our generation still hides the face of the Jesus of history. Perhaps a still greater need, to be added to those I have mentioned, is that moral earnestness which Schweitzer saw in those of his fellow-countrymen who wrestled in the critical study of the Life of Jesus as Jacob of old wrestled with the angel. Then it may be we shall prove the truth of Schweitzer's assurance: 'He does bless those who have wrestled with Him, so that, though they cannot take Him with them, yet, like men who have seen God face to face and received strength in their souls, they go on their way with renewed courage, ready to do battle with the world and its powers' (*op. cit.*, 311).

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Black *versus* White.

By the Reverend Archibald Crichton Barr, M.A., North Berwick.

'. . . we are more than conquerors . . .'—Ro 8^{37}.

A little boy called John lay in hospital getting well from diphtheria. His minister called to see him, and as they chatted together John kept turning his head to look longingly at a draught-board. It was on a table by his bed. The black men and the white men were all in their squares and ready for a game. The minister saw that John wanted to play but was too shy to ask.

'Would you like me to play draughts with you?' said the minister. John's face beamed with pleasure as he eagerly nodded his head. 'Let us make it the best of three,' said the minister. 'All right,' said John. 'You take the black men and I'll take the white.' The game began, and soon the black men were disappearing from the board. John easily won the first game. 'You take white this time,' said John, and added, 'white always wins.' Sure enough the black men were again defeated and the minister won the game. In the third game the white men were for the third time the winners, and John was delighted at having won two out of three games. 'White always wins,' he repeated. Then with the pride of a conqueror he said, 'Go to see my father some night. He is a good player. He will teach you. He taught me.'

As the minister travelled homeward he began to think of those games. We are always playing a game like draughts, he thought. Our hearts are draught-boards on which black men and white men, evil and good, strive for mastery. They watch one another, they wrestle with one another and try to chase one another from the board. Black selfishness tries to put white self-denial out of the game. White honesty struggles with black dishonesty. Kindness and unkindness oppose each other, thoughtlessness and sympathy, cowardice and courage. The contest goes on all day and every day.

'White always wins,' John had said. It certainly does not always win in this serious game we play in our hearts, thought the minister. White does often win. Kindness and sympathy make us give

up things for the comfort and gladness of others, and then selfishness is chased from the board. When we are brave in doing right cowardice goes out of the game. But sometimes a lie is told to escape punishment, or to make us seem big and bold, and then dishonesty is 'crowned.' We say things that hurt and wound and kindness retires defeated. No, white does not *always* win. How good it would be if white always did.

John advised the minister to learn from a good player. And we know of One Person in whose heart white never failed to win. The black men never won victories in Jesus' heart. He was never selfish, never thoughtless, never unkind, never untruthful. In His heart white always won, and He wants to see white winning in the hearts of all girls and boys. He is willing and eager to teach them so to play this great game of life that the black will always lose. He taught the Apostle Paul. St. Paul found to his sorrow that in his heart the white men were always losing to the black. Then he gave his heart to Jesus. He tried to think and do and be like Him, and every day asked Him for strength and guidance, and found that with Christ's help he was playing better. In his heart white virtues were scoring many more victories than before, and black, evil thoughts and desires were being more often subdued. That surely was part of what St. Paul meant when, speaking of Jesus, he said, 'We are more than conquerors through him that loved us.'

Invited In.

By the Reverend C. M. Hepburn, B.D., Crieff.

'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.'—Ps. 122[1].

In a town 'somewhere in central Scotland,' as they say on the wireless, there is a most attractive shop. It is an Art shop, with all sorts of artistic pictures, post-cards, pieces of pottery, and so on. Its windows are full of lovely things, the sort of things that tempt people passing along the street to stop and look at them. All the same it isn't sufficient for the shop to attract the passers-by to the windows. It must get them inside to purchase its goods. And that is the most interesting thing about the shop. As well as an 'art' shop, it's an 'artful' shop. It knows the kind of thing to do to induce buyers to walk in, because over the doorway of the shop there is a most original notice. This is what the notice says, seven simple little words, but very inviting ones they are :

'The shop that likes to be visited.'

Who could say No to that? Who could resist that invitation to step right in? A shop with such a smile of welcome on its face must attract many a visitor in.

Now as well as shops there are other places to which that sort of thing applies. Other inviting spots may charm us and cast a spell over us. In one of the loveliest plays ever written, a play entitled *Mary Rose*, one of the scenes is a beautiful little island, an island on which grow graceful birches and bright-berried rowan trees. The island, it seems, is too tiny to have a name of its own, but Barrie, the author, with a happy thought bestowed upon it the lovely title,

'The island that likes to be visited.'

I wonder whether any of you know such an island? I knew one once. It was right in the middle of a big reservoir, and many a time when I was a boy I used to look across the water and think I would like to visit that island. And visit it one day I did. It wasn't by boat. And it wasn't when there was ice on the water. And I didn't swim over. And it wasn't in an aeroplane either. No, strangely enough I walked across. Seems odd, doesn't it? As a matter of fact the reason was this, that one very hot and dry summer nearly the whole of the reservoir dried up, and I walked across to the island on the hard-baked mud on the bottom. It was, indeed a red-letter day in my experience when eventually I reached the island I longed so much to visit, and I wasn't disappointed in it.

Our like-to-be-visited list, however, isn't exhausted with shops and islands, something else has to be included. What, I wonder? Why, churches, of course. And that is true of your church as well as others. I imagine it saying on a Sunday morning when it sees you coming, 'Come away in.' It is simply delighted when you visit it, and it misses you a lot when you don't. Only this is important, too. May one say, to turn that round the reverse way, that you also like to visit it? There is a man in the Old Testament who tells us how it gladdened him to visit God's house.

'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.'

The same was true of our Saviour too, for He wouldn't have stayed behind in the Temple when He was a boy, talking to the wise men there, unless He had felt very happy in it. I trust it is that way with us all then, too. One hopes sincerely none of you are in church simply because you have got to be, but because you are glad to be, because

it is a delight and not merely a duty. May you always like to visit your church, because it certainly 'likes to be visited.' In 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,' which many of you will know, we are told of the right spirit of church-going.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay.

The Christian Year.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

To All Their Due.

'Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?'—Lk 12^{14}.

Jesus stepped into a full social system. Around Him there were political institutions of ancient standing: customs of commerce and conduct that were deeply rooted: systems of law and justice that had been slowly built up through the generations. What relation would Jesus assume towards this established social system? Would He venture on criticism, or, if need be, take a public stand against open and flagrant injustice?

The attitude He assumed to political programmes was summed up in the memorable sentence: 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.' What does that mean? Surely it means nothing less than this—that we give our full dues to the powers that be, fulfilling our duties to the State, to society, and to our fellow-citizens. We are members of the State, and we handle 'Cæsar's money.' That implies that we accept the privileges of State citizenship, State rights, State protection, State comfort, State amenities. Now if we accept great privileges, we should be as ready to accept great responsibilities. It is a mean thing to take all that the State offers, and refuse what the State needs.

'And to God, the things that are God's.' That is added as if its application regulated the message of the first sentence.

It does. For our view of the State will ultimately depend on our view of God. If God's true service be put first, our service of the State will never suffer. For in God our conscience is sharpened, our sense of duty is deepened, and our regard for others becomes a love. If, first of all, and most of all, we seek to give God what is God's due—our worship and reverence and obedience—we shall never grudge what is due to our fellow-men or to the State in which we live.

Let us turn now from His political attitude to the one He assumed to the intricate system of *municipal and national law* in His own land and day.

The dilemma of national law was introduced to Him in a singular fashion. He had been speaking to His disciples concerning the duties and dangers lying ahead of them in the difficult days to come. At the close of His talk He warned them that they might reasonably expect political trouble.

The casual word '*magistrate*' struck the ear of one man in the audience, and chimed in with his own preoccupied and unharmonious thoughts. He was that dreadful type of person, a man with a grievance. Evidently, there were two brothers of them who had fallen out pitifully about property. The quarrel had evidently gone to extremes. Why is it that between kinsfolk it generally goes to extremes?

Since this man appealed to Jesus, an unofficial person, we may justly infer that he had already tried all available official means without success. 'Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me.' What was he asking Jesus to do? His question invited our Lord, quite pointedly, not only to use His spiritual influence to settle a question of money, but also to set Himself over against the law of the land, to retry a case that had been already settled in the approved courts of justice, and so, directly or indirectly, to make some pronouncement on the system of legal justice under which He lived.

Christ's answer, in contrast with His usual manner, is noticeably stern. 'Man,' He said—there is a note of aloofness and reproof in that word—'Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?' There is more than a mere refusal in these words.

In the first place, there is a distinct and serious condemnation of the type of man who put the question and the type of question he put. The absurd irrelevance of this stranger's request showed that he had not been listening with any spiritual interest to the deep things of which Jesus had been speaking. He had apparently heard Christ's words—for he responded to one of them like a parrot—and then like some silly story-teller, he remarked:

'By the way, speaking about magistrates . . . !!!' Jesus has really nothing to say to that type of spiritual irrelevance.

But, further and deeper, our Lord's answer reveals an implied respect for the system of justice and the recognized officials of His own day. We should not pass this over lightly, as if there were no temptation or dilemma here for Jesus.

In the first place, He knew, as no other man ever did, how unequal and even unjust the best human laws may be. Indeed He actually warned His own disciples against going to law, and asked them to settle their disputes in the higher court of love and sacrifice. Even in the matter of the 'sacred law' He had shown how deadly all legal enactments may be, and how barren strict observance may be. And in place of legal exactness He had put the fulfilling spirit of love and service.

Further, knowing human nature as He did, He was aware how open the men of His day were to bribery and corruption.

He knew also that, even with good intention, a law might be questionably administered. Judges, like doctors, could disagree, and could so easily differ on a point of interpretation.

And, finally, none knew better that the most comprehensive law can never include all the equities. Sometimes in the framing and administration of law, equity escapes, like the perfume from a rose.

Why then did He not take this unique opportunity to let the world see that there might be principles higher than law, and that it might be expedient sometimes to set law aside? Our Lord refused to take any action, because He regarded the matter *as one with which He had nothing to do*! 'Who made me a judge or a divider over you?'

In its effect, His reply amounts to this: 'We have a system of law in our land. We people, as citizens, are ultimately responsible for our own laws. We make them. Our laws represent the formulated conscience of our people, so far as that can be ascertained. If our social conscience is bad, our laws are bad: and we are judged not only by the laws we decree but by the laws we allow. Submit your case therefore to your constituted authorities.'

There are at least three reasons why Jesus answered His inquirer in this abrupt fashion.

1. To put it in our homely phrase, this was not His job. He came to declare the Father's will and to give men the mind of God in such a way that they would have big, controlling principles of life and conduct to guide them in all details. He stated the broad principles of God's justice, righteousness, and love. From these He trusts us to make and administer our own laws, as occasion may arise.

2. Jesus answered the man in this fashion because, like most of us, he was laying the main emphasis on the wrong things. As soon as His inquirer went away, our Lord turned to the people and said: 'Take heed and beware of covetousness.' Take heed, that is, of any view of life that estimates it by what we have, instead of what we are—the things we can grasp, instead of the things we can do and be.

It may be hard for us to understand, but the fact remains, none the less, that Jesus was not really interested in 'things' at all. He Himself had no things! No home, no land, no possessions, no money.

It is difficult to know whether Christ's own programme is possible for us in our complex civilization. We have to live: and half our life, by a strange irony, consists in making or earning things. But, from Christ's point of view, we certainly put too much stress on material concerns. However important they may be, these things dwarf everything else, until material comfort becomes even the test of modern civilization. The most civilized nation is the nation that has most material plenty! What would Jesus say to that? He took this definite line for Himself that we might learn true values, and so might sit less tightly to the things of sense. We speak with reverence of the sacredness of property. He spoke only of the sacredness of souls.

3. He advised this man to abide by the law of his land, because He invariably did so Himself. He paid His own tribute when demanded. Christ might easily have claimed for Himself that He was above our poor and inadequate system. Why should He, with His august views, be bound by our pitiful little ideas of what is right and wrong? He must have seen how imperfect our legal provisions were. Yet He submitted Himself fully to the social exactions of His day and its governing powers.

That does not countenance quiescence or supine assent. If we make laws, we can unmake them. In this lies our remedy and our challenge. Let us see that our laws are in accordance with the declared mind of God and the love of Jesus. Let us work for finer and juster statutes. Let us point out all inadequacies and expose deficiencies. But what we ask others to respect, let us respect for ourselves.

It is our Christian duty to labour ceaselessly to make our social system perfect. But we should realize equally that no true character, private or

national, can be built up or sustained unless in the honouring of the laws which we make or permit.[1]

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT.

The Mystery of the Walking Trees.

BY THE REVEREND T. TUDOR RHYS, B.A., B.D., HINCKLEY.

'I see men as trees, walking.'—Mk 8^{24}.

An old sea captain one day complained to Turner that in a drawing of Plymouth Harbour he had given the ships no portholes. 'No,' said Turner, 'you cannot see the portholes. My business is to draw what I see.' And when, at a touch of the Master's hand, this blind man's eyes were opened, he, too, drew what he saw, only he drew it in words: 'I see men as trees, walking.' In after years, when the visible world had grown familiar, and when the wonder of that first strange vision had grown dim, may not this man have known a later seer's regret?

> Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
> To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
> The light that never was, on sea or land,
> The consecration, and the poet's dream.

What this man saw that day remains a word picture, but a picture nevertheless—a scene bathed in mist like a Turner, or hidden in half shadow like a Rembrandt.

Pictures, like texts, are sensitive to their surroundings. Even Tatian's 'Assumption' is shorn of much of its glory away from its home over the high altar of the Frari Church. By the artistry of the Holy Spirit this little word picture takes its place between two others. On the one side, and leading up to it, is the picture of the Forgotten Bread: 'Do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?' Its theme is the love and care of God in the past. On the other side, and following upon it, is the companion picture pointing to the future: 'The Son of Man must suffer—and after three days rise again.' And a little farther on is the vision of a still more distant future: 'When he cometh in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.' And between them, in its context of divine Providence on the one hand and of divine Promise on the other, comes this mysterious vision of men as trees, walking. Let us now turn to the picture itself in the setting where it belongs and enriched by its own disposition of shadow and light.

The true artist always leads you into his picture and leads you out of it again. So does our unknown word painter. It is men he sees; but men as he sees them are not figures in a closed landscape. There is mystery whence they come and there is mystery whither they go. The shadows of the past are behind them: the glory of their destiny is before them—'I see men as trees, walking.'

1. *A Vision of the Present*—'*I see men.*'

Every man has his own vision of human life and destiny, and, in what way soever he may give expression to what he sees, whether in colour, music, speech, or conduct, every man is his own artist—'I see men.'

But all depends upon how we see. The true artist, I have said, never sees, or paints what he sees, but that there is a way into the picture and a way out of it. Not so, however, the pessimist. John Davidson saw men; but men as he saw them were figures in a closed landscape:

> Folks like us, with hearts that beat,
> Sang it too in sun and rain—
> Heel and toe, from dawn to dusk,
> Round the world and home again.

Not so, either, the humanist. He, too, sees men; but men as he sees them are orphaned and bereft of any pedigree or promise. 'You see,' says Professor Eustace Haydon, 'we have only each other.' Not so, either, those whose religion is the State and whose god is race. Men, as they see them, are mere showers of hands, or payers of tribute, or consumers of food, or fodder for cannon, or pawns in a game, or cogs in a machine. Take religion out of life and you close the landscape at both ends, and man's life is ordered as though he came from nowhere and is bound for nowhere.

> Into this Universe, and why not knowing,
> Nor whence, like Water, willy-nilly flowing;
> And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
> I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.

But as to this man's picture of life as he saw it that day there is a way into it. It comes through—

2. *The Shadows of the Past*—'I see men *as trees*.'

Why as trees? This man had never seen a tree. No, but he had often touched one. The old sense

[1] J. Black, *The Dilemmas of Jesus*, 94.

of touch helps the new sense of sight. The past interprets the present. What he had learned in the shadows comes to enrich what he sees in the light. 'I see men as trees.'

In the second chapter of Genesis there is a strange phrase. It says that God created every plant 'before it was in the earth,' and every herb 'before it grew.' How could that be? Yet, how could it have been otherwise? There is no such thing as creation out of nothing. 'We understand,' says the writer of Hebrews, 'that the world was fashioned by the word of God, and thus the visible was made out of the invisible.' That plant, that flower, that tree was first a thought in the mind of God. And so were you, and so was I, and so was every man. 'I see men as trees,' says our unknown artist, and, in this respect, he sees aright. We are not figures in a closed landscape. We do not live in an orphaned world. We come into this world endowed with all the preparatory thought and care and love of God.

> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God.

But there, lurking in the shadows of the past, there is one thing more. How it came, or what its origin, is a dark and terrible mystery. It is the emergence of human sin and the threatened frustration of all divine thought and care and love.

There are some who fear for the future: they are afraid that civilization will collapse. The preventive of that lies, not in the future, but in the past. Deeper in those shadows and older than man's sin is the preparedness of God—the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world. If civilization sinks it will have to sink *through that*. It will have to fall through the gap where the Cross of Christ once stood. But that can never happen. We can never cross the reason why this world of ours was once the scene of the proving of God's love, and why the Resurrection is an event in our past history. That bulwark still stands. The Cross and its conquest is at the back of us. What Lowell says of the present and of the future is true also of the past:

> . . . and, behind the dim unknown,
> Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch
> above His own.

3. *The Light of the Future*—'I see men *as trees, walking*.'

The paradox is revealing. Our very likeness to other living things only emphasizes our difference from them. If man's life is motion, it is motion plus mystery. 'Man's unhappiness,' says Carlyle, 'comes from his greatness; it is because there is an infinite in him, which, with all his cunning, he cannot quite bury under the finite.'

This is our artist's way out of the picture, and it leads to the future and towards the light. And that light is a 'top light'; it shines from above. Truth and Goodness and Beauty are not man-made, they are God-given. They shine upon us from above and have their source in that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. This is why men all through the ages have followed the gleam and dreamed of a good time coming and of a golden age here on this earth. But how often have these dreams been shattered and those Utopias proved to be a mirage!

The cause of our failure is not far to seek. One has but to look again at the picture. If there is light ahead there are shadows behind, and to forget the shadows is to forfeit the light. 'The only thing to do with the past,' said some one, 'is to make a future out of it.' But we forget that it is only God who can work that miracle. Only God can forgive sin. And until men repent them of their sin and turn again to the God to whom they belong, all efforts to usher in a juster and a happier era will be vain. That better world for which all are yearning will not be the work of diplomats however skilled or of reformers however well-intentioned, it will be the gift of God to men who have repented and been forgiven. The world needs something far more drastic than to be made safe for the future, it needs to be saved from its past. Then, and only then, will the shadows flee and the light of the new day dawn.

Such is the picture: and, but for one thing more, it might have remained for this man, and for us, a blurred impression, fleeting and fragmentary, the glimpse of a passing moment. How do we know but that what we see may not be 'in the picture' at all, but merely a figment of our own fancy? And, for that matter, how can we be sure that even our highest hopes have any ground in ultimate reality? But Jesus was not done with this man. We read on: 'After that he put his hands again upon his eyes.' Thereupon the man looked straight in front of him (at whom but at Jesus?), and he saw all things clearly. And we, too, in this dark hour, need to look into the face of Jesus Christ. In Him all mysteries are resolved. 'We see not yet all things—but we see Jesus—crowned.'

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

God with us in Suffering.

BY PROFESSOR T. H. ROBINSON, LITT.D., D.D., D.TH., CARDIFF.

'For it became him . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.'—He 2^{10}.

The words fall strangely on our ears. They utter a challenge to our faith and to our thought. We are accustomed to the idea that suffering is often the punishment for sin, and that it may be used to remove weakness or to purify a man from some base alloy of the soul. But can we apply them to Jesus in either sense? We have always believed, with St. Paul, that He 'knew no sin,' and even to the writer of this Epistle the outstanding difference between our Lord and all others is that He was 'without sin.' It will be worth our while to look more closely into the matter.

We glance, then, for a moment, at another word in the sentence, 'Captain.' Here the Revised Version helps us, for it substitutes the term 'Author.' This is much to be preferred, for it is the meaning commonly given to the same Greek word in ch. 12^2, 'the author and finisher of our faith.' The metaphor is not that of a commander or a leader, but that of the founder and originator. It is Jesus who alone made salvation possible, and the true history of man's redemption must be carried back to Him, for it begins with Him.

So the truth enshrined in the verse comes more clearly to light. It was the experience of suffering that made Jesus a perfect—may we say rather 'complete'—author of salvation. There was much in Him that is to be admired and copied. His sinless life, His perfect character, His lofty teaching, His intense feeling for the needs of humanity—these things and many others would have given Him a unique position in human history, but none of them, nor even all of them together, would have made Him the author of salvation, the medium through whom God and man could be permanently brought into harmony and unity with one another. In addition to all other qualities and experiences, that of suffering was the essential factor in making Jesus our Saviour.

In a certain sense this is in full harmony with everything that is said and suggested in the New Testament with regard to the death of Jesus. All the forms of belief represented among the various writers see in the Cross the immediate act of salvation. There may be a number of different explanations of the way in which the end is achieved; one of our greatest living theologians once said that he could distinguish in the New Testament alone at least six different theories of the Atonement. But they all necessarily start from the one central event in human history, and are based on the fact that we 'were reconciled unto God through the death of his son.'

The position of the writer of *Hebrews* is particularly interesting, and represents a point of view which is not fully expressed elsewhere, though there are suggestions of it, for example, in Ph $2^{6ff.}$. The ostensible purpose of the book is to show how Jesus, and especially the death of Jesus, is a fulfilment of the old Jewish sacrificial system, with its elaborate ritual involving priest, temple, and victim. The writer is concerned to show that all this was but a symbol of that which has actually taken place in the death of Jesus, and that it is all now unnecessary. To use St. Paul's language again, that which is perfect is now come, and that which was in part has been done away. The argument is carried through with consummate skill and with close attention to detail. In the nature of the case, it is of comparatively little force to any but Jews, but underneath it all there are deeper convictions which are nearer to being permanent and universal. As a matter of fact, we seldom get the best out of a man when he is trying to prove a case. At the back of our minds, even while we may applaud the argument and agree with the conclusions, there is the feeling, often only half-conscious, that he is trying to score debating points rather than engaging in a determined search for truth. There is a lurking suspicion that much might be said on the other side, that some points have been glossed over and others entirely omitted, while from time to time we wonder whether, after all, the logic is absolutely sound and whether the interpretation given to certain events and language is the only one possible or even the best of several. It is only when we find remarks and statements which have no place in the formal argument that we feel sure of reaching the inner heart of the writer or speaker. It is not so much the things which he deliberately puts in, as the things which he cannot keep out, which attract us—those obsessions which spring from the deeper levels of his spiritual composition, and insist on rising to the surface from time to time, almost against the express desire of the man.

Now repeatedly in the Epistle to the Hebrews we are struck by a characteristic point of view which, for want of a better term, we may call a doctrine

of atonement by sympathy. No writer insists more strongly on the divine origin of Jesus, and yet it is His perfect humanity on which the stress seems to be laid. He was made in all things like unto His brethren. He has suffered being tempted. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities—in other words sympathizes with us—seeing that He is exactly like us, apart from the fact of sin. Like man He has to die once and need die only once.

We realize the full meaning of this only when we refer to such a passage as $9^{15ff.}$, where Jesus is presented as the 'mediator' of the new covenant. True, there seems to be some ambiguity in the language used, and possibly more than one type of thought is present. But it is clear that in the ideal relationship between God and man, which is to be restored by Him, Jesus takes the place between the two parties who are to be united. The union of the two can be accomplished when both have been essentially united to a third party, whose life must be given and taken. Both will enter, as it were, into Him, and so into one another, forming no longer two separate entities, but a single whole. Such a function can be performed only by one who Himself belonged to both, in other words, to one who is both fully God and fully man. Hence it is necessary that He should share in all normal human experience—always with the great exception of sin.

Now suffering is the common lot of all humanity. Life may end with Hallelujah, but it certainly begins with a cry, and, for all we know, there may be as much pain in being born as in giving birth. So true is this that every system of religious and philosophical thought has had to take the fact into account, and in India, especially in Buddhism, the whole aim is to be delivered from suffering. Yet, so intimately is it bound up with personal existence that deliverance is to be found only in the extinction of personal identity. And even that is worth while. In direct contradiction to this point of view, the Christian gospel boldly asserts that suffering, so far from being the supreme evil, is an integral element in the highest of all forms of experience, that of God Himself. Of course we do not like it, and we try to escape from it; it would not be suffering if we enjoyed pain. But the fact is accepted, and is, in a very real sense, made the basis of redemption. Man and God have to be brought together; here is something which is a part of universal human life; since man cannot escape from it, God must enter into it in and through the Mediator. Jesus would not have been and could not have been a complete author of salvation unless He had shared in human pain.

May we venture to go a step further? As far back as the eighth century B.C. we have in Hosea a picture of the agony of God, the divine heart broken by human sin. The truth is emphasized and fully proclaimed only in the Cross, where we behold God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. We realize that, when we attempt to enter on an understanding or an explanation of the nature and feeling of God, we are on holy ground, and our best efforts can but touch the fringe of the matter. Yet, with deep reverence and with profound humility, we may dare to guess that even for God a knowledge of suffering is indispensable. The very creation of free humanity involves the risk, almost the certainty, of that pain, and we are bound to believe, therefore, that it was deliberately assumed by the Creator. Indeed, if we know anything of real love at all, we know that it implies at least the possibility of suffering, and we have no right to suppose that our Father would impose on human love a condition from which His own is free. Love and suffering—the two are inseparable as far as we know.

May it not be possible, then, that the experience of suffering is an indispensable element in complete personality, whether human or divine? We all know how much greater men and women are when they have endured terrible things. When we meet one of the heroes of Dunkirk or of the Cretan evacuation, we feel inevitably that we are face to face with a person who is *bigger* than we are. Not necessarily *better*, but certainly with greater capacity for good. And not a few of us, after a severe air-raid, when once the shock is over and we have recovered our normal poise, realize that, terrible as the experience was while it lasted, we would not have been without it, for it has given a fuller and a deeper meaning to life.

If that be so, then we can understand, if but dimly, why even Jesus had to endure pain. Indeed, it becomes clear that His suffering must be greater than any other known in history. One of the permanent values of His death lies in the fact that no man can ever stand in the presence of Christ and say, 'You do not know what my life means, for you have never known the meaning of my pain.' On the contrary, His appeal is based on the fact that He *does* know, and knows more fully than any other can know, the meaning of man's worst experiences. He *is* the author of our salvation, just because He has been made complete through suffering.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Raise the Arches.

'Lift up your head, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.'—Ps $24^{7f.}$.

'Raise your arches, O ye gates, raise yourselves, you ancient doors! Welcome the glorious King! "But who is the glorious King?" 'Tis the Eternal, strong in might, the Eternal conquering from the fight.'—Dr. Moffatt's translation.

The writer of this Psalm has a hunger for God. He looks abroad and finds all the earth is the Lord's, God is Creator and Owner of it all. But it is not easy to find God there. He is diffused rather than definite. Therefore the seeker turns to the 'hill of the Lord,' to 'his holy place,' the trysting place for the soul and God. He thinks upon the conditions required, 'clean hands and a pure heart,' sincerity, integrity, and uprightness. People with these moral features seek God's face successfully. But, alas, He is not in His Holy Place. Where is He? There is a stir at the gates of the Temple. Outside the porch the sound of a Coming One. Why does He halt? Because the portal is too low. He towers above them in His victorious might. He is of too lofty a nature to enter. Then the poet breaks into this impassioned outburst: 'Raise the arches, Lift the gateway. Make room *upwards* for the glorious King.' If He is to be received, the entrance gate must be heightened. The gateway is imperfect. It has been built on too mean a plan, or the upper vaulting has somehow been built up so that there is not room for the conqueror's form to pass within. The doorway is unworthy of Him, therefore He waits without. 'Re-make the doorway,' is the cry; 'Up with that lowering arch, expand skywards. The portal must be greater to be fit to receive the greatest who would enter in.'

This is of course true of all the greatest experiences of life. They pass us by unless we are prepared to expand to receive them. Or, if we do not miss them, they leave us unblessed because they had to shrink to fit our meanness. Unless there is willingness for transformation by the great experience, we remain as if it had not been. This was conspicuous in the last war. Some men and women were continuously on the defensive against the high emotions, challenges, and demands of the war-years. They emerged from them unchanged—unhurt but unblessed. The same is true of the twin-mysteries of birth and death. Motherhood changes some careless women into all that the sacred word 'mother' implies. In like fashion, the solemnity of death in some homes entirely fails to ennoble affection or to produce a serious thought. Unless there is preparedness to be enlarged—and enlargement often involves suffering—the great experience is unidentified. To speak truly, it is never really experienced at all. But it is especially true of the experience of God's entry into the soul. Unless there is expansion of faith and love and loyalty, if inhibitions and provisos are imposed upon the Divine Visitant, the human personality receives but a fragment of what God can give.

This is of course not the complete truth about the greatness of God when in contact with man. His greatness is often revealed by His willingness to lay it aside. 'God grew likest God in being born.' He enters wherever a humble heart welcomes Him. He enters often where there is no explicit welcome, where He is, so to speak, unidentified. But if He is to be known as Conqueror, He must be received as befits a Conqueror. If we are to know the succour of His victory, we must do homage to Him as Victor.

Many of us long to see more of God's presence in the Church and in the nation and in our own life. We long to see Him as Conqueror over the hearts and sins of men. There is something like a hunger for God in new quarters, a longing to experience His power in unlooked-for places. Why then do we not see Him more unmistakably Sovereign in many areas of life? Are men's thoughts of Him, and of His ways with men, mean and insufficient? Are we limiting God by the habits of our minds, by the customs of our lives, by our spiritual attitude? It is the gateway, not the temple, which is too low according to this poet.

There is a street in London called Cripplegate, a survival of the day when the street was named from the gateway in the wall which led to it. But we are told Cripplegate was not the entrance for the lame and infirm, it was Creephole Gate, the little postern by which only foot travellers could come and they must bow their heads. Truly in many souls there is so small a gateway that it would be difficult for a baby-angel to enter in.

We begin naturally with the Church of Christ, the spiritual fulfilment of what the Temple foretold. The Apostle Paul educates us to have high thoughts of the Church as God's creation, channel, and cherished possession. Writing to the little Corinthian congregation, rent with divisions, stained by condoning immorality in one of its members, easily becoming hysterical with spiritual excitement—of this Church he says: 'I espoused you to Christ as a pure virgin.' Flawless, stainless,

without reproach—that is what he longs for her to be. There is an ideal to be cherished and to be reinstated. That was to lift high the gateway for God's incoming. Do we think thus of our congregation, of its character and of its mission? On one side, there is so much that is material and earthly and exacting. We have to care for the future of the building, funds to gather and to distribute. We have to meet each other's criticisms and harmonize our varying points of view. All this is necessary, but it is not the chief part.

There is another side. We are a fellowship of men and women bound by common loyalty to the Saviour of us all and therefore bound to one another. We are a part of the Church of the Living God, a chosen instrument to make known His mind and will and love to the world. Our services are channels for the inflow of His grace and the instructions of His spirit. Our Communions are His chosen method of accentuating His presence with us. We ourselves are members of His body, unworthy though we be. Can we not keep more steadfastly before us what we ought to be in our unity and ardour and devotion and obedience? In all our work and thoughts and criticisms we should keep continuously before us the ideal of Christ's apostles. That would be to lift the doorways and bid welcome to the glorious King.

Let us think of mankind. What a spectacle! Nations warring against each other, classes estranged from each other, individuals suspicious of each other. How easy to be cynical and hopeless and wearied in our struggles for a better world. How easy to deride the aims or achievements of this or that organization for the betterment of the race! But there is another view of mankind. 'Sheep without a shepherd,' said Jesus as He watched the restless multitude, wistful but unresolved. And in the Book of Revelation we read of the city of glorified humanity, 'And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof . . . and they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it.' The instinct of Nationality, that surging force among the nations, is to be fulfilled in Heaven. When we think such thoughts we raise the arches for the King of Glory to come in. There is an infection abroad of bitterness and hate, concerning other classes and other races. That is an influence directed against God. We must never flinch from the fact. We must open our eyes steadily to all the alienations, prejudices, irritations, and antagonisms which haunt the family of nations, scarcely conscious of the family-bond. But never so as to shut God out. Let us think great pitiful thoughts of mankind, so imperfect, so aspiring. That shall be our welcome to God, entering the arena where races and peoples struggle and misunderstand, entering to conquer.

Then, to come to ourselves. We too have our earthly side. We work for pence or pounds, count them anxiously or gleefully, spend them or save them. And we can be disagreeable to people who love us, and lose our tempers and act meanly and seem to be anything but the sons and daughters of God. If we are content to live thus, to snatch what pleasures we can, then we lower the arches till it is difficult for an angel to creep in, much less God. But we know this is not the whole truth about us. We know that we are called to love more people, to love more truly and abundantly. None of us is left to become embedded in the mud of the world without inward remonstrance and questioning. We know, too, that Christ was embodied as we are. He made our human nature a real possession of His. We are His kinsfolk after the flesh, and we may be His kinsfolk after the Spirit. To us all comes the question whether we are going to live up to something above us or down to something below us. Only when we aspire and honestly seek to translate our aspirations into actuality are we enlarging the imperfect gateway of our souls. It is only the man who is seeking to live up to a standard, and confesses when he fails and begins again with a tighter grip of God, into whose soul the conquering God can come.[1]

[1] R. C. Gillie, *The Gospel for the Modern Mind*, 36.

The Influence of Rabindranath Tagore.

By W. S. Urquhart, D.Litt., D.D., D.L., LL.D., Emeritus Principal of the Scottish Church College, Calcutta.

A few months ago the world-renowned poet, Rabindranath Tagore, completed his earthly pilgrimage of fourscore years—in the land he loved so well, and in the city with which his ancestral connexion was so close. An aloof and slightly elusive personality, cultured in the highest degree, aristocratic and æsthetic, bearing honours with dignity and criticism with equanimity, but responding warmly to appreciation and affection, he was yet capable of throwing himself with enthusiasm into any great cause, whether literary, social, political, or religious, and he identified himself very intimately with the life of the people. Long before the end of his life—not without periods in the wilderness—he had won the affection of his countrymen everywhere, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. And his fame had travelled far beyond India. Ten years ago his seventieth birthday was celebrated by the publication of a sumptuous volume, in itself a masterpiece of Indian artistic printing, called *The Golden Book of Tagore*, inscribed as 'a homage from India and the World,' and including amongst the contributors men and women from all classes and every civilized country, princes and pundits, poets, politicians, scientists, artists, journalists, and social workers; famous personalities like Jane Addams and Helen Keller, Maeterlinck, Galsworthy, Masefield, W. B. Yeats and Romain Rolland, Yone Noguchi and Rudolph Otto, Benedetto Croce and Einstein, all joined together to offer a tribute of admiration and to prove, if proof were needed, the width and range of Rabindranath's fame and influence.

Yet, notwithstanding his world-citizenship and his almost uninterrupted zest for travelling, he was a devoted Indian nationalist, not in the narrow political meaning of the term, but in the sense that he regarded his Indian cultural and religious inheritance as central and as dominating, for him in his own soul and as regards his message to the world, all the influences which came to him from other sources. At the same time, he was by no means provincial in his orientalism. A good many years ago, in the course of a conversation upon Indian music, he spoke of his first visit to Europe, and, on being asked about his first impressions of Western music, he confessed that he had thought it all a horrid noise, but added that he had subsequently greatly modified his opinion—which story is symbolic both of his presuppositions and his development. In relation to the inherited thought of India, he is neither a reactionary nor a revolutionary. He is both Eastern and Western, but more Eastern than Western. In the home where he was brought up the sacred scriptures of India were the texts of daily worship, and he never failed to acknowledge his debt to the past of his country. In a comparatively recent article he says of India: 'My eyes were first opened in thy light and they will be closed finally upon that very light.' His countrymen have been quick to appreciate this passionate devotion to the motherland. Professor Radhakrishnan says of him, 'In his work India finds the lost word she was seeking'; and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his latest book speaks of how Rabindranath had in Bengal bridged the gulf which previously existed between the intelligentsia and the masses, his songs being sung everywhere and loved everywhere, even in the huts of the poorest of the peasants. A non-Indian also, W. B. Yeats, emphasizes this same point: 'He carried back again to the multitude the thought of the scholar and the noble.'

His indebtedness to Western influences, however, should not be minimized. He was greatly impressed, particularly in his earlier days, by the public spirit and social activity of the West, and the influence of Christianity, especially, explains his extra-traditional emphasis upon personality, its value and its activity, and the necessity which he obviously felt was laid upon him of finding a metaphysical basis for ethics in belief in a personal God whose purpose was love and in whose service was perfect freedom. The Eastern dress in which he has clothed ideas of this type has sometimes concealed their origin, perhaps more from others than from himself. This want of recognition would not in itself be of importance were it not that the consequent attribution of many of his ideas to Indian sources has led some of his adherents in India to think, somewhat mistakenly, that they can draw sufficient inspiration for modern life from the same sources: and has prevented his admirers in the West from appreciating justly the

contribution which Christianity has already made to the thought and life of India.

His thought marks a distinct advance in the development of Indian speculation. He retains what is best in the Indian pantheistic tradition—its intense spirituality and its conception of the nearness of the divine to the human, its opposition to materialism and to all merely utilitarian pragmatism. He pours scorn upon a naturalistic science which confines itself to 'the lightless world of facts' and which regards the establishment of natural law as if it were an end in itself. He is equally scornful, but in a lighter manner, of the practically minded man who complains of the prodigality of Nature and is distressed because in our towns we cannot more directly use the light of the stars to save the rate-payers money; and with a poet's fine contempt of the profit-taking attitude to Nature he urges that the only way in which we can 'save the face of God' over against a charge of extravagance is by rejoicing in the beauty of the world He has made. Occasionally, perhaps, he retains too much of the ancient pantheistic attitude, and a strain of negation, fatalism, and passivity creeps into his thought, but on the whole the positive and the activistic attitude prevails.

He has no desire to withdraw from the world in response to the negations taught in his ancestral thought. If there is a negative element at all in his own teaching it is of a selective character, a transformation of values in the interests of the higher rather than the lower, not a denial of all values. For him God is the concrete and not the abstract Universal, and 'the Universal,' he says, 'is ever seeking its consummation in the unique.' He is ever conscious of the unity of the whole and of the worthlessness of the part when taken by itself, but the unity must never be permitted to dissolve the variety of the parts. He has a zest for life in all its forms, mental, material, and spiritual, and a deadly hatred of all monotonous uniformity. He would inspire men with courage to 'knock at every open door.' Even in his latest years he took part as an actor in the presentation of his own plays, and almost at the close of his life he embarked upon a new career as an artist and held an exhibition of his pictures in Europe. Perhaps they would not have attracted much attention if he had not been already famous on other counts, but the enterprise was revelatory of his character.

He holds strongly that the deepest tendency of Indian thought was positive and that its highest endeavour was to affirm the presence of the Infinite in all things. This conception guards him against mere naturalism, but at the same time allows him to take up an almost Wordsworthian attitude to the beauty of Nature, although with a lightness of touch and a frequent playfulness which is in contrast to Wordsworth's unrelieved seriousness. The Indian emphasis upon the spirituality of Nature must never, according to Rabindranath, be allowed to deprive the universe of meaning. We have but to open our eyes to the universe that is around us and we shall find everywhere an object of worship. So he arrives at what might be called a sacramental view of Nature and of life. The Infinite is not apart and abstract, but diffused through the world of Nature and of man. There are degrees of reality in the sense that each one of our experiences reflects in greater or less degree the spirit of the whole. It is the poet's function and privilege to recapture this wholeness as it is embodied in the various symbols of the world, to hear again the song of the Eternal, and 'to translate back the singing into the original joy.' He is a poet only in so far as he is able to do this. He is a philosopher when he is able to understand the meaning and harmony of the whole, and he is a religious man in so far as he is able to adore. But his adoration will not be according to set forms of ritual or in special places for worship. It will be the worship of the *ashram*, or communal hermitage, where, for the Indian, as has been said, 'home, school, temple, and forest are one,' the symbolism of this *ashram* being that for the Indian religious man in his deepest sincerity—and for Rabindranath—religion is not something apart, but is interfused from his earliest years with all the gradually developing experiences of life, and opens out, not upon the artificialities of city life, but upon the naturalness of the forest, changed hardly at all by the efforts of man. Rabindranath points out a difference between Greek and Indian civilization. The former was nurtured within city walls; the latter found its home in forests, near to Nature, so that there was in India no necessary antagonism between man and Nature, no unsatisfied desire on the part of man to wrest treasures from Nature, and make them his own by building walls round them. It is this 'building of walls,' according to Rabindranath's oft repeated thought, that makes us, especially in the West, lose sight of our true being.

But Rabindranath detaches himself from the main current of previous Indian thought in his teaching that we can reach the divine unity more through activity than through passivity. Activity is not merely a gymnastic of the soul to prevent its 'sleeping in stagnation'; it is in itself com-

munion with God ; its highest motive is that God has worked and is working. 'Where can I meet Thee unless in my home made Thine ? Where can I join Thee unless in this my work transformed into Thy work ? ', and the most frequently quoted passage from *Gitanjali* is in the same strain : 'Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads. . . . Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee. He is where the tiller is tilling the hard ground, and where the pathmaker is breaking stones. . . .'

The highest attribute of God is His joyous activity in the world, and this activity is full of a purpose of good in which men may share. We thus reach, almost for the first time in Indian philosophical thought, a satisfactory metaphysical basis for ethics. The divine activity is not only play, or aimless, but is an expression of the nature of God, and in human goodness we may discover an inner kinship with God. The moral life becomes a universal life. To live according to goodness is to realize one's unity with God, and this, according to Rabindranath, was the heavenly vision which was granted in fullest measure to Jesus Christ. We are not bound by the laws of fate, but have freedom to co-operate and commune with God. And our ultimate goal is not absorption in God, but the persistence and growing fullness of our personality in fellowship with Him. Joy is the essence of God's nature, but joy is empty unless it is shared. Hence joy implies love, but love, again, is meaningless apart from the reciprocity of those whom God loves. 'Thy love for me still waits for my love.'

Rabindranath's religious teaching culminates in a note of resolute optimism. Pain is not the last word in human life, and evil is essentially impermanent. Those of us who have been familiar with the poet's career have sometimes wondered whether his life had not been too sheltered and cultured and whether, despite tragic sorrows and disappointments, he had ever had to face the harsh and brutal facts of life. The difficulties which he had to meet in later years in connexion with his academic enterprises, were largely softened for him by the veneration in which he was held, and he had not to face the actualities of the problems which lesser men would have had personally to solve. Similarly we sometimes wonder whether the optimism of his religious thought is not a little too facile. Has he taken full account of the implications of the divine gift of freedom to man ? Has he realized that freedom means freedom to do evil as well as to do good ? Although he speaks in one passage of sin as 'the innermost barrier which keeps us apart from our God,' he is yet capable of writing a whole chapter on 'The Problem of Evil' without mentioning the word 'sin.' He seems to regard it as an obstruction of our vision of God, and does not face the further possibility that it is possible to have a clear vision of the good and yet do the evil. Correspondingly, joy is not the only aspect of God. If there are pain and evil in the world, there must also be sorrow in the heart of God, and this sorrow will not express itself in mere sentimental pity or facile forgiveness. The Christian faith is that God Himself must deal with the evil men have wrought in the world—deal with it by sharing in the suffering of humanity, and by redemption delivering men from evil so that their joy may be the joy of victory and not mere obliviousness or correction of the consequences of error. The wrath of God is not an obsolete theological conception ; it is the abiding reflex of the continuity of God's righteous character. Yet the last word is not with wrath but with love ; only it is the love of a Father who is capable of wrath *and* of redemption.

Something may be added in conclusion about the attitude of Rabindranath towards the political aspirations of his countrymen. Some of them have regarded him as lukewarm, as too rare and refined a spirit to enter upon the dusty arena of politics, and in fact they would have been rather disappointed if he had stepped down from the pedestal of the sage. Undoubtedly, he was not first and foremost a politician in the explicit sense of the term. If he had been, his services would have been valuable in preventing the excesses of extremists both of the Right and of the Left. But his *métier* was of another kind. Yet he became growingly sensitive to the collective needs and aspirations of his people. Perhaps light might be thrown upon his attitude if we remind ourselves of his severely philosophical dictum that 'the universal is ever seeking its consummation in the unique.' It was this uniqueness of India, and of Indians individually, which he felt was in danger of being lost. While he was appreciative of the benefits which in many ways the British connexion had brought to India—unduly appreciative according to the critical attitude of some of his perfervid compatriots—yet he was keenly sensitive to the danger of treating people in the mass or of substituting the rules of good government for sympathetic understanding ; and the conception of the 'ruling race' was particularly abhorrent to him. Recently two members of that race were watching a travel film. One said to the other : 'What interesting faces these people have.' The other said, not without a touch of complacency, 'Oh, I always think these foreigners all look exactly alike.' It was well for the second

speaker that Rabindranath did not overhear the remark.

He was an earnest Indian nationalist, but not crudely. Nationalism, as he put it, was always 'Janus-faced.' In one aspect it could be aggressive, and he never ceased to point out that this was possible in India as well as elsewhere. In the West this national aggressiveness, according to him, was the parent of imperialism, fascism, totalitarianism, and had been the cause both of the last great war and of the present one. He warned Indians in no uncertain terms of the dangers of such a nationalism developing within India herself. On the other hand, he feels that India has a unique contribution to make to a commonwealth of free nations, not necessarily in any antagonism to the British commonwealth. But she can make this contribution only if she herself is free. She must be permitted to take risks and make mistakes. Self-government, he holds, cannot be withheld because of the possibility of blunders in the working of the new constitution. He argues, in regard to India, that 'if in our character the qualities necessary for successful self-government appear to be in defect, it is all the more reason that practice in the art should be the sooner commenced. Had it been true that men must first deserve and then desire, then no people in the world would ever have attained freedom.'

Rabindranath may not stand forth with sufficient distinctness apart from his Indian environment and heritage to be regarded by future ages as one of the leaders of the thought and practice of the world. His activities were perhaps too diffused and detailed, and he himself too much aloof, too aristocratic in spirit, too self-conscious, too *précieux* for this. He is rather like the creepers which twine amongst the trunks and branches of the trees of the Indian forest, exuberantly vital in their growth, brilliant in their foliage and blossoming, brightening the forest with colour, but not affecting it in any fundamental way, or making it obviously more fit for the habitation of men. Yet this metaphor would be unfair as suggesting too much the ideas of dependence, accommodation, and passivity, which are foreign to Rabindranath's nature. Rather is he to be compared to the soft revealing light of the dawn penetrating the gloom of the forest, broadening gradually but not yet completely, into the full light of day in which men, for the most part, have to take up the burden of the work of the world.

Entre Nous.

Dr. Marett.

Dr. R. R. Marett, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, has just written his autobiography—*A Jerseyman at Oxford* (Milford; 15s. net). He begins his prologue: 'A Great War once again devastating Europe. My splendid sailor son killed in action. My native Island under the heel of the enemy. My College depleted and disorganized. Myself past seventy-four. What a moment to start on an autobiography. And yet there is much to be said for it. This ought to prove a way of escape.' He says later that he is temperamentally incapable of harbouring sorrow. 'But for me the war brought to a sudden end the long summer of my life. Henceforth I must face chill autumn and chillier winter, and yet somehow refuse to be downhearted.'

The work of his College goes on. 'I feel, then, about the College as about the country that it can, and will, stand up to whatever happens. . . . After all, the new generations are being born and must be educated; so, if we at Oxford show sufficient adaptability, we can be assured of survival. . . . This is a free community where young men study so as to find out for themselves, if not entirely by themselves, what truth and beauty and goodness are—in short, what makes life really worth living. Their sort may not be beloved by the organizers of popular propaganda, since they will not fail to detect humbug. But they will have opinions and faith of their own, and therefore be enduringly strong-minded and stout-hearted, as those who depend on herd-instinct can never be.'

Amongst the most interesting chapters are those on 'Friends' and 'More Friends.' One wonders if any one has had more friends that he has—and there are good stories about them all—Asquith, Einstein, Chesterton, and many others. The title of the last chapter is 'Know Thyself,' and in it he describes his attitude to life. 'I would insist on the voluntary nature of all religious association; and hate the very notion of a theocracy as a peculiarly vicious type of despotism that would enslave not merely the temporal but likewise the spiritual life. The moment that society ventures

to interpose its arbitrary decrees between me and my intellectual and moral conscience, I am ready to become a rebel, and to take the consequences. Free service for the sake of the good is, as I see it, the one and only condition of true progress—in religion, in morals, and in politics alike. Whereas a fanatical nationalism is no excuse for war, men are justified, I think, in fighting to the last for that kind of freedom.

'Meditating on these lines, then, I hold our cause in the present war to be just, and can put up with my personal sufferings so long as British liberty eventually wins the day. Nay, even should we go down fighting, it were better than to acquiesce in spiritual bondage. For, as a philosopher and an anthropologist, I am bound to take a long view of man's mental and historical development, and have come to believe that no terrorism resting on brute force will permanently hold the hero back from standing up to the world until he can make it fit for a free life—one that encourages individual effort in the pursuit of the ideal. To that end our Oxford education is directed, and it has been a great privilege to assist, however humbly, in a task so brave and noble. Nay, even in these troublous times the good work goes on, so that most fortunately I can still play my small part in it. Wherefore I say with Horace:

Ille potens sui
laetusque deget, cui licet in diem
Dixisse Vixi.

In plain English, I have trusted in life, and it has not betrayed me.'

'He was a Man.'

In the *form* of an autobiography Mr. Perry Burgess, the President of the American Leprosy Foundation, writes on leprosy and how it is being treated in the colony at Culion in the Philippines. *Who Walk Alone*, however, is more than a treatise. It is the touching and poignant story of a man's achievement in tragic circumstances. 'Ned Langford,' a third-year college student, enlisted in the American Army during the Spanish American war of 1898, and while serving in the Philippines, contracted leprosy. 'I have told Ned's story,' Mr. Burgess writes in the Foreword, 'because I knew him well, because he has now joined his comrades who have answered the last muster, and because his heroic and successful efforts to cope with this new and frightening world in which he suddenly found himself impressed me as one of the great human sagas. . . . The incidents credited to Ned are in all essentials those which he experienced. I have added from the actual experiences of others whom I have known only enough additional material to obscure his identity and preserve the self-imposed anonymity under which some of the people whom the book touches are living at this very moment.

'The story had to be written in this personal fashion since no man I ever knew was more real, more actually alive than Ned Langford—his dogs—his house—his business—his wish to die under the flag he had served—his bags of wild game. I was with him once when he and Brant returned from the cogon with three wild hogs. His delight was that of huntsmen everywhere. As Ned said of his father, so it could be said of Ned, "He was a man."'

When leprosy was diagnosed, Ned spared his family the horror of the knowledge by arranging with his brother that he should be presumed to have died. With his doctor's words ringing in his mind, 'It may be that you, Ned Langford, are to play a special rôle in the war against leprosy,' and again, 'You have to do this, soldier, whether you are scared or not. You can take it standing up fighting, or you can lie down and let it beat you. And you're the only one who can say about that.' He started back to the Philippines to become this time a member of the leper colony there. He wrote to his brother Tom: 'I know nothing of the world into which I am going . . . I've just accepted what can't be avoided—I've lost my life—I shall try to find it again.'

From the beginning he fitted in to the strange new life. He did what he could to help. He mixed freely with the Philippinos. From his first night at Culion there dated his friendship with little Tomas—later to become his devoted servant.

'Somebody was sobbing. It sounded like a child. . . .

'I couldn't stand it. I slipped from under the netting and crossed to the bed. He was just a youngster lying face down, muffling his sobs in his arms. . . .

'"What is your name?" I asked him.

'"Tomas, sir—Tomas Aguilar."

'"How old are you, Tomas?"

'"Ten, almost. It's much more than nine, sir."'

If the patients were to have any hope and feeling of being useful, Ned saw they must have employment. He started a co-operative fishing industry and this was later followed by an important electricity generating plant. Looking back on it all after years—he spent a quarter of a century there at Culion before his tired heart gave out—he was able to feel: 'I had worked here to some

purpose. The current that lit the streets through which I passed; the food that might be eaten without fear because of the ice that preserved it; the comforts that were possible because of the throbbing plant down by the sea; in these things I had played a vital part. Well, the plant would go on without me; I had trained José thoroughly.

'I took the lower road along the sea. We three, the dogs and I, were very tired.'

He was not left alone. During all the years he had the help and friendship of all the medical and administrative staff. And 'Manson (the Protestant pastor), I thought, counted me among his converts. And at that, he might be right. Something had stood by me throughout the years, something was standing by me now, as I started through the gate.'

Prayer.

Lord Caldecote, Lord Chief Justice of England, presided at the monthly prayer meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, held on the eve of the second anniversary of the war. 'In spite of all that is indicative of neglect or forgetfulness of God, make no mistake about it,' said Lord Caldecote, 'there is a solid phalanx of power which springs from the reality of Christian faith in this land of ours. It is a fact which explains a great deal that people have called miraculous. The exercise of the privilege of prayer far surpassed in its effectiveness all the propaganda that any Ministry of Information could put out. We may be on the verge of great events, and surely we cannot prepare ourselves better for them than by prayer, by putting ourselves into touch with God's power.'

New Poetry.

Willoughby Weaving.

Fifty war sonnets by Willoughby Weaving have been published by Mr. Basil Blackwell (4s. 6d. net). The title of the volume is *Purple Testament*—'The purple testament of bleeding War.' As the title suggests the sonnets are, for the most part, set in the presence of war, and are notably virile in their thought and expression. As an example we might quote, 'The Attack on the French Fleet.'

Like one who strikes and stuns a drowning friend
To save him, so at need we struck thee, France,
Lest we should be involved in thy mischance
And thy wild agony our efforts end.
Not only had we strongly to defend
Thee from thyself: the world's deliverance
Was in our keeping. Turn thy bitter glance
From what we did and greet what we intend.
To save ourselves we struck the hated blow?
Yes, but our safety, France, was no less thine.
What thou wast doing little didst thou know;
But we to escape what thou didst not design
Knew what we had to do and hurt thee so
To save us all from perfidy malign.

Ursula Wood.

The title of Ursula Wood's collection of poems—also published by Mr. Blackwell (3s. 6d. net)—is *No Other Choice*.

I have no other choice
Either for pen or voice
To sing or write.

We welcome all that is old and all that is new in this slim attractive volume. For Miss Wood is a true poet, and here we have that fineness of thought and feeling that we have come to expect in her work. Take, first of all, 'The Strangers.'

I have only been to the edge of that country,
only known hunger a little and guessed at cold,
dimly imagined how a child's body might be old
from living with damp and dark and hunger
perpetually.

No. I have never crossed the border, never
gone to see
the places they live in, hear the words they say,
it would be no use to them, no use to me
if I was haunted by strangers every day.
I'll have no ghosts in my room: so I have only
been
to the edge of that country, and returned, having
seen
enough to be glad I turned and hurried away.

And then this:

Time's not an enemy to friends,
though words that kindle words grow less
and changed the tenses.
But kindness lingers in the deadening senses
and nothing ends,
though two that talked all night until the day
will sit together with no words to say
in easy silences.

Printed by Morrison & Gibb Limited, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to The Editor, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.